

# Infantry

Winter 2003

## Our Infantry at War

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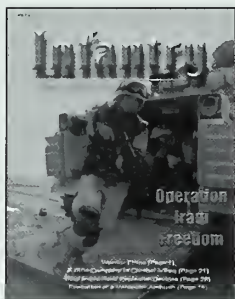
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#### FRONT COVER:

Private Christopher Nauman, a M203 gunner from 3d Battalion, 15th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized), conducts dismount drills along the Iraqi border in December 2002. The 3-15th was among the 3d ID units that crossed over into Iraq during the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Sergeant First Class David K. Dismukes)

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# Infantry

WINTER 2003

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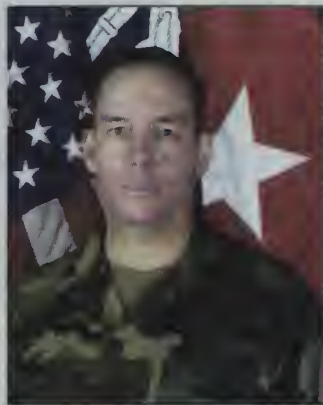
# Commandant's Note

BRIGADIER GENERAL BENJAMIN C. FREAKLEY

## WARRIOR ETHOS — HEART OF THE INFANTRY

All Soldiers must be Warriors. This goes to the heart of what soldiering is all about, because it comprises those moral, ethical, and psychological attributes that ultimately define success on the battlefield and guide us as Soldiers. The Warrior Ethos demands that we put the mission ahead of all else, refuse to accept defeat, never quit, and never leave a fallen comrade. But this Ethos does not — and indeed cannot — limit itself only to how we conduct ourselves in combat. It must be inculcated into every Soldier from the time of enlistment until that man or woman carries those attributes into civilian life. Ours is a values-based Army, something that the Infantry best personifies and demonstrates in the way we carry out our jobs every day. The seven Army values define what we must demand of ourselves and of each other, and are the foundation of the Soldier's Creed that appears on the inside back cover of this magazine.

Today's operational environment requires that we remain receptive to change so that we may capitalize on our burgeoning advances in technology and do our missions better. The battlefield communications, target acquisition, and weapons systems that we now see in development and fielding were unimaginable even two decades ago, but today they are our stock in trade. With them has come the realization of the inevitability of change and the necessity of adaptation to new and improved ways of warfighting. We accept and enthusiastically endorse this. But we are also in the profession of killing those who would attack our nation at home and abroad. It is the widespread understanding of this, among allies and adversaries alike, that makes possible both credible deterrence and the assurance that we will destroy any foe who chooses to test our resolve. In this time of change, the Infantry recognizes two unchanging tenets of our profession: that the infantry fight is a close, personal, and violent one; and that the Warrior Ethos is the foundation of the American Soldier's total commitment to victory in peace and war. It is the moral and ethical soul of the Infantry and the Soldiers who personify her. Today we see this Ethos reflected in the countless reports and anecdotes out of Iraq and Afghanistan, where our Soldiers are standing toe to toe with our enemies, and punishing them more severely than these adversaries



could have ever imagined. Closing with and destroying an enemy, however, is but one facet of the Infantry's mission. This is evident in the array of humanitarian missions our troops are carrying out today in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in other regions where threat of armed conflict is ever-present. Even as our Soldiers perform those missions essential to the rebuilding of nations — many of which take place in unstable urban settings — the current operating environment dictates that they be prepared to again rapidly transition into the familiar infantry task of closing with and destroying the enemy. And that calls for Warriors.

Task Force Soldier, based right here at Fort Benning, has developed a three-pronged strategy for the Warrior Ethos Implementation, which addresses Warrior Skills, Warrior Culture, and Mental and Physical Toughness. The implementation itself will be infused throughout the Army both from the bottom up and from the top down. While Soldiers entering service for the first time are learning the Warrior Skills, the Army's senior leadership will likewise take part in what amounts to a fundamental shift in how the Army thinks collectively. They will gain a thorough understanding of the Warrior Culture, and hence will be better able to sustain Soldiers in their understanding of — and commitment to — Warrior Ethos. These first two measures will serve as cornerstones of our education and information campaign to educate the Army, its leaders, and the American public.

The third prong of our implementation is Mental and Physical Toughness. The warrior must be both mentally and physically tougher than his opponent, because to simply survive on the battlefield is not enough. He must be able to endure the physical and mental hardships of combat and retain that inner determination to engage and kill his adversary. We are also expanding our modern Army combatives program.

We can best foster and sustain Warrior Ethos through training and experience. Our training of infantrymen is the best in the world, and we want to make sure that Soldiers in all military occupational specialties (MOS) other than infantry likewise have the skills and the physical and mental desire to aggressively close with and destroy any enemy who could impede the performance of their mission. The secure rear areas of the past — and the false sense of security they implied — no longer exist in today's





operating environment. Logistical facilities and convoys are potentially lucrative and tempting targets, and we will make sure that any adversary who thinks of them as our soft underbelly will find he has walked into a hornet's nest.

But training is only the first step; the experience and confidence gained by those who meet the test of combat will permeate the force and exhort others to emulate them. Proverbs xxvii, 17 tells us that "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Leadership will both hone and maintain the warrior focus of our Soldiers, and will build upon the qualities they carried into the Army. Warriors create more Warriors by their example, and we can infuse combat and operational experience into our training by assigning Soldiers with these backgrounds to our service schools. These alumni from recent field assignments can thus pass on their experience to those who will replace them in the global war on terror. Their credentials will add a measure of credibility to their subject matter expertise in our institutions. Although one observation does not a trend make, we must capture those enduring lessons learned and inculcate them into our doctrine. The introduction of our combat leadership speaker program here at Fort Benning is a valuable step toward this goal.

The training of our junior officers is key to the assimilation of Warrior Ethos into the core of our Army, for it is they who must demonstrate their commitment by example. We are attempting to accelerate implementation of the Basic Officer Leader Course II (BOLC II) as our main effort for building Warrior Ethos from the bottom up in our officer corps. We are likewise infusing those

same principles into our Initial Entry Training, the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, and the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course curricula. As these young leaders attain positions of increasingly greater responsibility — along with a concomitantly greater ability to influence change — they will sustain the Army's Warrior Culture.

Finally, we see the expansion of Ranger training opportunities to other than combat arms Soldiers as vital to the propagation of an Army-wide Warrior Ethos. All branches that support infantry and armor task forces need access to this, the premier Army Warrior school, because it is Ranger School that best replicates what we can expect in combat. In so doing, it teaches students to function effectively under conditions of mental and physical stress found in no other Army school, something that will pay dividends when they must face the demands of operational assignments.

Warrior Ethos is both a goal and an azimuth for our Army and the Infantry. We are committed to its realization because it will develop, attract, and retain the flexible, adaptive, and competent Soldiers who live the Army's Warrior Culture. These Soldiers are grounded in the Army Values and live the Warrior Ethos in the field, in garrison, and in their contact with their fellow Americans. The Infantry leads the way in providing the climate, training and resources to develop and sustain the Warrior Ethos. America and her citizens may be assured of security in their jobs and homes, and our enemies must recognize the folly of attacking the United States, her people, or her interests, either here or anywhere in the world. Follow me!





## Army Fields New Shotgun System

A new lightweight shotgun system (LSS) developed by the Soldier Battle Lab is currently being fielded by U.S. Soldiers serving in Afghanistan. About 200 of the XM-26 shotgun systems were delivered to 10th Mountain Division units in Kandahar and Bagram in November 2003.

The 10th Mountain will field the lightest variation of the 12-gauge shotgun systems, which attaches under the M4 modular weapons system (MWS), and weighs 2 pounds, 11 ounces, which is less than the M203 grenade launcher.

The system is a five-round, box-magazine fed, manually operated shotgun. It uses a straight push-pull type bolt action that can be switched for either left or right-handed users. The attachment variation is 16.5 inches in length and uses the host weapon's sights. It is capable of firing lethal, nonlethal and breaching rounds.

The shotgun stand-alone version is converted from the attachable version by adding a pistol grip and a butt stock. The stand-



alone weighs 4 pounds, 3 ounces and is 24 inches long, collapsed. This version also has a reversible charging handle and is capable of firing lethal, nonlethal and breaching rounds.

The original system was a prototype for proof of concept, said Mike Barnes, chief of the Battle Lab's Robotics Division. The one being fielded applied lessons

learned from the first iterations of testing to make them more reliable in the field.

During the operational inspections and test firing, the Battle Lab, with assistance from two 10th Mountain NCOs fired nearly 20,000 00 Buckshot, M-1030 breaching, M-1012 and M-1013 nonlethal rounds through the 199 weapons that were going to be sent to Afghanistan to ensure no Soldier would be issued a defective or otherwise ineffective LSS, according to Soldier Battle Lab Project Officer Michael Kennedy.

Battle Lab personnel also deployed to Afghanistan to sign over the weapons and gave comprehensive instruction on aspects of the XM-26 to include capabilities, limitations, features, zeroing, disassembly and maintenance to units receiving the LSS. Classroom instruction as well as ranges were held in both Kandahar and Bagram to familiarize the Soldiers with their new weapons.

Even after the Battle Lab staff returned to Fort Benning, the deployed Soldiers can still contact the lab with questions and problems and are encouraged to send feedback on the weapons system.

"Out of the 200 weapons, I've fired about 50 of them, and I'm confident in the system," said Staff Sergeant William Partin, an instructor at the 10th Mountain's Light Fighter School and one of the two NCOs who helped test the weapon system.

"I think it's a great weapon system, being able to attach to the M-4 and as a stand-alone," he said. "I like that it's light. This is the lightest weapon I've carried in the Army besides a pistol. It weighs just about nothing."

Soldiers can use the shotgun as an all-round tool in urban environment, Barnes said. They can use the nonlethal and breaching capabilities, and the big advantage is that they don't have to sling their primary weapon to do it.

"Think about what's going on in the world right now," said Staff Sergeant Tito Zelada, a Light Fighter School instructor who also tested the LSS. "You have combatants and noncombatants together in a crowd, and (the nonlethal capability) is a good way to neutralize them, whether or not they are armed."



Soldier Battle Lab photos

*A 10th Mountain Division Soldier practices door breaching techniques on wooden pallets during a training session in Afghanistan.*





*A 10th Mountain Soldier practices firing the XM-26 LSS during a range in Afghanistan.*

## XM-26:

*Continued from page 3*

"Numerous units in the field expressed the need for a tool like this," Barnes said. "I think it will get a lot of use."

"I thought the Remington 870 — what we teach with — was sufficient, but this gives us the upper hand on the way we breach," Partin said. "It's more accessible and easier than having to switch weapons."

The creation of the LSS and its fielding is due to the efforts of Battle Lab staff. In 1997, the concept for the LSS was almost abandoned after the development community was convinced the concept would not work. The Battle Lab wasn't as easily swayed and continued to investigate the potential of an accessory shotgun and its military utility. The lab staff's persistence and hard work finally paid off in 2003 when the XM-26 underwent operational inspections and acceptance testing in September and October at Fort Benning's Buckner Range.

The XM-26 LSS will provide Soldiers with an extremely versatile weapon that allows them to use lethal, nonlethal and breaching rounds and give them the agility to defeat a wide range of threats.

**Editor's Note:** *Information for this article was compiled from articles by Specialist Brian Trapp of Fort Benning's The Bayonet newspaper, and Major Roy C. Manauis and Michael Kennedy of the Soldier Battle Lab.*

# Use of Two New Fibers Could Lighten Body Armor

Two new fibers are vying to one day replace the respected but heavier Kevlar, the staple of body armor for decades, as the Army strives to enhance mobility by reducing the Soldier load. Body armor is one of the more riveting individual equipment successes, especially from the ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, with reports of dozens of saved lives directly attributed to the bullet and shrapnel-halting ability of the helmet, flexible vest and rigid chest plate combination worn by troops. Even though it protects well, body armor ranks with water, ammunition and weapon as the heaviest items worn or carried by troops, according to engineers on the Ballistics Technology Team at the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Massachusetts. "The Army is putting the best available armor materials into Soldiers' armor," said Philip Cuniff, a research mechanical engineer. "Part of our work in the Ballistics Technology Team is to develop new materials and techniques to lighten the load of those armor systems."

Body armor technology has advanced in the past century to protect the head and torso against high-velocity handgun bullets and fragmenting munitions, such as those from artillery shells, mortar shells, mines and grenades. Lightweight small arms protection is also now available for the torso.

The nylon "flak" vest for ground troops and steel helmet from the 1960s were replaced by Kevlar vests and helmets during the 1980s in a product called Personnel Armor System, Ground Troops (PASGT). At the users' request, performance increased with the PASGT system but weight remained about the same, according to Cuniff. The next major change was in the 1990s with an improved version of Kevlar that helped lighten the vest by 25 percent and increased ballistic protection.

The team's objective is to reduce the weight again, this time by 25-30 percent, without losing performance. Zylon and M5 fibers show potential in meeting or

exceeding that goal. Zylon, a commercially-available fiber first developed by the Air Force in the 1980s and now produced in Japan, turned in a solid performance in testing, said Cuniff. A prototype helmet made last year with Zylon was developed as part of the Human Systems Defense Technology Objective for Ballistic Protection for Improved Survivability. The Zylon helmet weighs 1.79 pounds vs. 3 pounds for the PASGT at the same protection levels. Cuniff said two possible roadblocks with Zylon are environmental degradation and the law requiring certain military products to be manufactured in the United States with domestic materials. Zylon has shown to break down with exposure to light, high heat and humidity, although Cuniff said there may be solutions to these problems.

An alternative material to Zylon is M5, an ultra-high performance fiber developed by Magellan Systems International in Bethesda, Md.

According to a mathematical model of Cuniff's for the estimation of impact performance based on the mechanical properties of armor materials, M5 appeared to provide exceptional impact performance.

His model indicated that M5 could cut weight by at least 35 percent compared to currently available fragmentation armor at the same protection level. So far, the ballistic impact test results with a limited, relatively low-strength sample of M5 are glowing. "We shot it, and it came out better than we expected," Cuniff said. "We found there was something wrong with the model; we underpredicted the performance of the material. Of everything we looked at, it looks like (M5) will be a really big improvement in reducing the weight of armor." Another feature of M5 fiber is excellent thermal and flame protection. Besides helmets, fragmentation vests and composites for use in conjunction with ceramic materials for small arms protective plates, M5 fiber could also be used for structural composites for vehicles and aircraft.

For more information on the Soldier Systems Center, visit the SSC on the Web at [www.natick.army.mil](http://www.natick.army.mil).





Private First Class Eliamar Castanon

*Competitors aim down range during the U.S. Army International Sniper Competition at Fort Benning, Ga.*

# One Shot, One Kill

## Snipers Converge on Benning for Competition

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ELIAMAR CASTANON

Sniper teams from around the world converged on Fort Benning Nov. 8-15 for the third annual U.S. Army International Sniper Competition.

Twenty-one two-man sniper teams from military units around the world including Germany, Canada and Great Britain competed this year.

The teams came to find out who is "the best of the best," said Captain Joseph K. Dickerson, Sniper School commander.

"Win or lose, we want everybody to walk out of here feeling like they've learned something," Dickerson said. "Of course, the winner will get the bragging rights."

The sniper teams competed in 14 events for the titles of Top Gun and Top Spotter. The events included:

**Known Distance** - Competitors were required to fire a rifle at a target 800 meters away.

**Stalking event** - Competitors had to successfully conceal themselves while engaging targets.

**Unknown distance** - Snipers were

given 10 targets and 30 minutes to estimate the distance of the targets and engage them.

**Range estimation** - Competitors had to estimate the distance their targets were placed at downrange.

**Snaps and movers** - Snipers had to fire at pop-up and moving targets. There was also a night iteration of this event.

**Alternate shooting positions** - Snipers had to fire at targets from different firing positions to include standing, kneeling, sitting and lying on their backs.

**10-ring shoot** - The sniper fired at targets while the spotter checked his accuracy with binoculars and told him how to adjust his sights.

**Keep in Memory (KIMs) game** - Each competitor was put under physical stress by doing push-ups, sit-ups and running. They were shown different pictures of targets during each physical event and then required to engage each target by memory.

**Cold bore and final shot** - This event represented the snipers' motto of "one shot, one kill." Each sniper was given one bullet and one target.

### Top Gun and Top Spotter teams

**1st place:** Sergeant David Kroupa and Specialist Kris Hector

**2nd place:** Tech Sergeants Edlem Applegate and Michael Walker

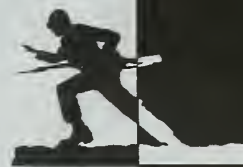
**3rd place:** Staff Sergeant Ryan Yates and Specialist Adam Plumondore

**4th place:** Senior Airman Brian Deacherage and Tech Sergeant Chad West

**5th place:** Canadian Corporals Martin Bedard and Sebastian Dube



# PROFESSIONAL FORUM



## *The Fighting Eagle TAC*

1-8th forms tactical command post ground assault element

MAJOR DARRON L. WRIGHT

The “Fighting Eagles” of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (Mechanized), 4th Infantry Division – who are currently deployed to Iraq, – recently implemented a new tactic, technique, and procedure (TTP) for operating its tactical command post (TAC). In the first three months of the Iraqi campaign, the TAC – consisting of the commander’s and S-3’s Bradley fighting vehicles (BFVs) – executed its primary mission of command and control (C2) of the forward fight. Due to recent operational developments and changes in enemy tactics, the TAC has since been task organized with additional assets and reformed into the TAC Ground Assault Element (TAC GAE). While C2 remains its primary mission, the TAC – with the added firepower – can be employed into the fight at a moment’s notice. This article focuses on the TAC as a fighting element and how it can achieve quick, decisive results with minimal risk. The article defines the operational environment, TAC task organization, and capabilities/missions as well as discusses recent operations conducted to demonstrate the TAC’s effectiveness.

### OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The current operating environment in Iraq is quite different than the traditional battlefield of the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. Since the decisive defeat and dismantling of the Iraqi Army, the nature of the war and fighting conditions has drastically changed. Today, in the heart of the “Sunni Triangle” vicinity of Balad, Iraq, 1-8 Infantry finds itself operating on a noncontiguous battlefield, fighting in a low intensity conflict, where the enemy is using guerrilla-style tactics to combat the overwhelming firepower and superior training of coalition forces in an attempt to undermine coalition resolve and sway public opinion. Tactics used by the enemy include close ambushes with RPG-7s (rocket-propelled grenades) combined with small arms fire, use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) placed along well-traveled routes frequently used by coalition forces, and the frequent firing of mortars at high value targets (HVTs) such as the Corps logistics support area (LSA). These attacks are normally carried out by three to five individuals – usually peasants or local farmers who have been paid a generous sum by former Baath Party and Fedayeen leaders. The scenario described above mirrors the operating environment found at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana. As such, mechanized units alike have adapted their TTPs to combat enemy actions.

Based on the current threat environment and the fact that attacks can occur at anytime from any direction, no element is safe from attack. All Soldiers must be equipped and prepared to fight at anytime. Therefore, the Fighting Eagle TAC was born and has since operated with great success.

Another justification for forming the fighting TAC is the fact that our area of operations (AO) covers more than 80 square kilometers, and we have rifle companies established in outlying forward operating bases (FOBs). In order for the commander and S-3 to conduct battlefield circulation and C2 operations, the TAC must travel great distances day and night when there is always the imminent threat of contact. In addition, the fighting TAC acts as a combat multiplier by conducting limited operations, which preserves line company combat power for larger missions. Therefore, the fighting TAC is organized, prepared and capable of closing with and destroying the enemy once contact is made.

### TAC TASK ORGANIZATION

As mentioned previously, at the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom the TAC consisted of two BFVs. After three months of fighting, based on enemy tactics and tactical lessons learned, the TAC added Scouts, dismounted infantrymen and additional wheeled assets forming a formidable ground assault element, which could be employed at a moments notice much like a quick reaction force (QRF).

### CAPABILITIES / MISSIONS

Task organized as listed above, the fighting TAC has added capabilities and can execute an array of missions across the spectrum of conflict while conducting its primary mission of C2. Capabilities include mobility and firepower equal to that of a mechanized infantry platoon, the ability to sustain itself for 24 to 48 hours if necessary, and the ability to serve as a QRF. As mentioned, the threat faced has been minimal with the largest element operating in three-to-five-man teams. Upon contact, the threat is outmatched numerically and outgunned in firepower.

The missions executed by the TAC cover the full spectrum of offensive and stability and support operations (SASO). The majority of operations executed by the TAC are in conjunction with the TAC accompanying one of our rifle companies providing C2 for the main effort. However, depending on METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops – time available) and the situation, the TAC has operated



independently executing raids, cordon and search operations, flash checkpoints, presence patrols and most recently the TAC executed search and attack operations to locate enemy mortars firing in our AO. There is no limit to the operations that can be conducted by the fighting TAC.

### RECENT OPERATIONS

The fighting TAC has executed numerous missions to prove its effectiveness as a ground assault element. Most recently, the fighting TAC executed a movement to contact operation to locate and destroy a suspected mortar position which had been responsible for firing on the Corps LSA, which is located at Balad Airfield, Iraq. The operation was not deliberately planned. The TAC was on routine patrol in the vicinity of the LSA when it received mortar fire. The call to react came from higher headquarters, and the TAC — being the closest element — responded. Based on successful templating by the S-2, the TAC maneuvered to the suspected location and arrived within 10 minutes of the mortar's firing. After 20 minutes of searching, our scout element caught three individuals attempting to cache 82mm mortar rounds. They were immediately detained, and a detailed search of a nearby orchard was conducted that led to the discovery and seizure of an 82mm mortar and additional mortar rounds.

Another successful mission executed by the fighting TAC was the seizure of one of the largest weapons and explosive caches since the end of major hostilities was declared in early May. This operation was executed based on an informant lead, which provided the location and names of the individuals associated. The intelligence pointed to a senior Iraqi Al Qaeda leader who had conducted recent attacks against coalition forces in Baghdad and was operating out of a remote farmhouse near Ad Duluwiyah, Iraq. The informant stated that the cache would be moved soon to avoid detection and quick response was required to seize it. The fighting TAC quickly assembled, a fragmentary order was issued, and the operation was conducted. Upon arrival at the farmhouse, an inner and outer cordon was set, and the house was cleared by our scout element. The targeted individual was not home at the time; however, in an adjacent building, explosives were found along with several prepared



Sergeant Jack Morse

*A Soldier from the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, pulls security at a site near Balad, Iraq.*

IEDs. The TAC found one ton of C4, 80,000 meters of detonation cord, and numerous electronic fuses. Additionally, the scouts and other infantrymen conducted a detailed search of the area with the assistance of mine detectors and soon found a buried cache. This cache contained more than 20 SA-16s, 75 RPG-7s, 50-100 AK 47s, SKS' and RPK machine guns and several crates of ammunition.

Finally, the fighting TAC conducts combat/presence patrols every time it leaves the wire while conducting battlefield circulation. During the course of these patrols, the TAC has come under ambush in the form of IEDs, RPG-7s and direct fire. Based on these contacts, the TAC has honed its tactical skills. However, the fighting TAC has not been without its share of wounded Soldiers. In the event of casualties, the TAC quickly provides buddy aid, secures the perimeter, sets up the landing zone (LZ), and contacts the air medevac. The skills acquired through Combat Lifesavers Training are invaluable. This, coupled with calm senior leadership, has saved several Soldiers who were seriously wounded.

The techniques discussed are used by all of our maneuver forces. The TAC is simply another fighting element at the commander's disposal. Organized and employed in the manner discussed, the TAC proves invaluable in its day-to-day operations. The combat power of this element far exceeds and outmatches any threat faced. This element, like all other maneuver elements, can operate and execute missions across the

spectrum of conflict. Our primary function is C2 of the battalion fight, but by thinking outside the box, the fighting TAC can operate independently and achieve decisive results.

The current operational environment in the "Sunni Triangle" is much like the environment at JRTC. Tactics used there have been adapted, adjusted and implemented and proven highly effective. Everyone at anytime is subject to attack and therefore everyone must be prepared to fight. The Fighting Eagles learned these lessons early on and formed the Fighting Eagle TAC.

The key to success is to counter the enemy no matter how small with overwhelming force. Therein lies the decisive point in this fight in Iraq. The fighting TAC is not a new concept, rather an adjustment in the way we fight. Task organized and employed in this manner the fighting TAC introduces not only another combat multiplier for the battalion, but also one with agility, speed and force. The mission remains the same — to close with and destroy by means of fire and maneuver. However, the fighting TAC provides another maneuver element on the asymmetric battlefield capable of destroying enemy resistance.

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**Major Darron L. Wright** is currently serving as the 1-8 IN (M) S-3, operations officer in Balad, Iraq, and has been deployed since April 2003. He is a recent graduate of the Naval War College (2002) and was commissioned in 1988 from Kemper Military College, Booneville, Missouri.

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# A TRANSFORMED FORCE IN LEGACY CLOTHING

COLONEL BLAIR ROSS



Photos by Private First Class Brandon Aird

*A Soldier with the 173d Airborne Brigade pauses to adjust his gear during a mission in Iraq.*

The deployment and subsequent actions of the 173d Airborne Brigade during Operation Iraqi Freedom do much to demonstrate how today's legacy forces can lean forward towards the intended capabilities of the Army's Future Force. By taking advantage of evolved organizational and operational constructs, as well as exploiting U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR)-provided modular enhancements to their baseline force — all the while leveraging emerging technologies for command, control, and intelligence — the Sky Soldiers of the 173d have shown that they can project an agile, mobile combined arms team across strategic distances, ready to accomplish a broad array of battlefield tasks.

The 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team's parachute assault and follow-on airland operations into Bashur Airfield, Iraq, have been covered in detail in other publications. On March 31, 2003 — just 96 hours after their parachute jump — the brigade task force's 2,000-plus personnel and equipment were closed into the airhead with their lodgment secure. Coordinated operations were also underway with U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the Kurdish elements they were working with. In the absence of the 4th Infantry Division,

which was denied overland passage through Turkey, the 173d firmly established a conventional force presence in northern Iraq. The Light Airfield Repair Package (LARP) from the brigade's organic Combat Support Company, with the assistance of the Air Force's 86th Contingency Readiness Group, had a C-17-capable expeditionary airfield fully operational, and the brigade was ready to call forward additional combat and supporting forces for expanded operations.

Over the next eight days, the brigade built supply stocks and established a workable sustainment infrastructure. The 201st Forward Support Battalion headquarters, attached to the brigade from the 1st Infantry Division, orchestrated a broad array of logistics activities. Leveraging joint and locally contracted capabilities, the 201st enhanced the lean organic sustainment package brought in to the lodgment by the 173d's 501st Forward Support Company. Exploiting a direct link to the USAREUR/21st Theater Support Command's 200th Materiel Management Center, as well as a nightly air bridge from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, the 201st generated a versatile, responsive sustainment system that kept the 173d and nearby SOF units fully supplied.

It simultaneously began building the stocks necessary to support follow-on heavy forces upon their arrival.

During this period, paratroopers from the brigade's 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry (Abn); 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Abn); and organic 74th Long Range Surveillance (LRS) Company conducted reconnaissance of routes and key terrain beyond the airhead and within the "Green Line" that informally demarcated the boundary between Kurdish and Iraqi-controlled territory. Throughout these operations, the brigade exploited the capabilities bestowed by a unique motorization package adopted over the previous two years.

Providing expanded organic mobility down to the rifle company level, the brigade's units were able to push well away from their perimeter without the need for extensive external transportation support.

These distributed operations placed a premium on the 173d's satellite communications capabilities. From a TSC-93 wideband multi-channel system at the brigade tactical operations center (TOC) to PRC-117s with individual LRS teams, the brigade and its subunits maintained positive control over great distances in highly compartmented, mountainous terrain.





*An Iraqi man waves to members of the 173d Airborne Brigade as they drive along a road in Iraq.*

Situational awareness for unit commanders was further improved by the Enhanced Information System (EIS), a USAREUR-fielded initiative that provides satellite-based blue force tracking as well as text message capabilities, all Global Command and Control System-Army (GCCS-A) compatible and displayed in unit TOCs via the Command and Control Personal Computer (C2PC). The ultimate challenge for the brigade's communications network came as its units began escorting convoys of nonlethal supplies — belatedly permitted access through Turkey — from the Turkey-Iraq border over a 180 kilometer ground LOC through Kurdish-controlled territory to Bashur.

The Brigade S2 section was able to exploit a range of intelligence systems as they sought to refine the picture of the dynamic enemy situation. Equipped for this mission with Joint Deployable Intelligence Support System (JDISS), Trojan Spirit, and Common Ground Station (CGS) downlinks, and supported by elements of B Company, 110th MI Battalion, (attached from the 10th Mountain Division), the brigade had unparalleled access to intelligence products provided by higher headquarters and agencies. Shortly before deploying, the brigade received two Dragon Eye UAVs, a simple-to-operate, Marine Corps-developed system that gave over-the-horizon video capabilities at the tactical level. These sources, on top of the information provided by visual reconnaissance and reporting from unit patrols and LRS teams, allowed the brigade to maintain a superb picture of what

was occurring in their area of operations.

The intelligence that this robust architecture provided fed a targeting process that the brigade used to gradually focus its assets against defending enemy forces. With dug-in Iraqi units facing Kurdish Pesh Merga elements along the Green Line, the brigade coordinated for and executed two supporting artillery raids. Using the 105mm howitzers of D Battery, 319th Field Artillery (Abn), as well as newly-fielded 120mm mortars from the infantry battalion mortar platoons, they brought these Iraqi ground units under conventional artillery fire for the first time. The same intelligence-driven targeting process later evolved to focus a broad array of assets in the execution of stability operations following the collapse of Iraqi resistance.

By April 8, adequate fuel stocks had been built to support sustained operations by heavy forces. Over the following several days, USAREUR Immediate Reaction Force (IRF) elements deployed into Bashur via C-17 and C-130, under the tactical control of the headquarters of the 1st Battalion, 63d Armor. These forces consisted of the IRF's Heavy Ready Company (HRC), the Medium Ready Company (MRC), a C130-transportable infantry company equipped with M113 APCs; as well as Combat Service Support, Scout Platoon, and 120mm Mortar Platoon Force Enhancement Modules (FEMs). The IRF, with equipment maintained at Rhine



*A Sky Soldier from the 173d Airborne Brigade watches bystanders walk by during a patrol in Iraq.*

Ordnance Barracks (next to Ramstein Air Base) and personnel provided by tactical units on a rotational basis, gives USAREUR a tailorable, rapidly deployable capability to project mobile, lethal, and well-protected forces in response to a wide range of contingency requirements.

As the 173d closed these additional forces, it prepared for anticipated combat operations in the vicinity of Kirkuk and the neighboring oil fields. Kirkuk is a key northern population center, and the oil fields and associated oil production infrastructure that stretch for many miles to the north and west of the city represent the most





*Soldiers from the 173d Airborne Brigade practice advance party disembark procedures in Bashur, Iraq.*

significant strategic asset in northern Iraq. The Iraqi forces defending Kirkuk and its surrounding areas had been subjected to increasing pressure by Kurdish forces and their advisors from the Coalition Forces Special Operations Command's Joint Special Operations Task Force-North (JSOTF-N), heavily supported by coalition air forces. After being pounded by coalition air strikes, continuously probed by the Pesh Merga, confronted with the rout of Republican Guard and other forces in the vicinity of Baghdad, and facing a building conventional force to their front, Iraqi units began coming apart by the end of the first week in April. In the face of the rapidly disintegrating Iraqi forces, the 173d accelerated preparations and initiated an attack towards Kirkuk on April 10. The Sky Soldiers were immediately confronted with a situation significantly different than what they had expected. Instead of fortified defenses, they encountered a chaotic urban environment, with civil authority entirely broken down. Kurdish resistance groups, Turkmen elements, and other factions were vying to establish themselves. Looters were starting to emerge, initially focusing on government buildings, then any place and anything of potential value. Water and electric power services were shut down, and food stocks were dwindling.

The response to these highly charged conditions presented an exacting challenge to the Soldiers and leaders of the brigade, placing a premium on the flexibility and initiative of officers and NCOs up and down the chain of command. Companies, platoons, and squads began operations in a decentralized framework as the brigade stretched its assets to protect key infrastructure and address localized problems, in an AO at approximately 10,000 square kilometers. The brigade's senior leaders relied heavily on the judgment and initiative of young officers and NCOs well honed by operations in similar environments in the Balkans. By April 14, key nodes, including the large military airfield at Kirkuk, were secure, and presence patrolling initiated.

Attached Civil Affairs teams came to the forefront, although

almost every maneuver unit was conducting civil affairs operations of one form or another. The brigade's early engagement along these lines, backed up where necessary with the overwhelming combat power of the attached M1s and M2s, suppressed a number of potential problems before they grew into crises. The few linguists who deployed with the brigade proved unable to meet the volume of requirements, and the brigade rapidly worked to acquire the support of contracted local interpreters. With an absence of open conflict, media attention soon focused on frictions between various factions and lack of order in general; the strong relationships and attention to media concerns that the brigade's leaders formed

during the embed process paid big dividends as the brigade's Soldiers told the story of their efforts in Kirkuk.

With presence required at key locations dispersed over hundreds of square kilometers, any of which might require reinforcement at short notice, the brigade again leaned on its distributed command and control and logistics infrastructure to direct and sustain its components. The brigade organized Quick Reaction Forces, enabled by both its motorized capabilities and its attached heavy assets, to mitigate the risk to widely dispersed subunits.

The brigade's leadership, from top to bottom, reoriented on the demanding tasks of reestablishing order, moderating tensions between various factions, restoring basic services, and setting the conditions for the regeneration of a stable system of government in the area. Early successes were followed by continued progress. At the time of this writing, linkup with forces arriving from the south, as well as the arrival and initiation of work by representatives from DoD and other agencies, finds the brigade on the cusp of overseeing local elections to populate a new, democratically based government.

Throughout their participation to date in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade have demonstrated many of the attributes at the heart of the Army's Transformation concepts. The rapid deployment of an agile force tailored to a mission; leveraging of many of the highest technology C2 and intelligence systems available to ground forces today; flexible application of capabilities to a rapidly changing environment; and the reliance on the judgment and initiative of all levels of the chain of command to adapt to fluid situations all show the 173d to be much more than a vestige of the Army's past structure — it is truly a transformed force in legacy clothing.

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Colonel Blair Ross is the currently serving as chief of staff of the U.S. Army Southern European Task Force (Airborne), the parent headquarters of the 173d Airborne Brigade. He was commissioned into the Infantry from the U.S. Military Academy in 1978.

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***THE ARMY'S ULTIMATE LIFESAVING FORCE ...***

# THE FORWARD SURGICAL TEAM

Staff Sergeant Lee A. Osberry Jr.

**COLONEL HARRY K. STINGER  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT M. RUSH**

**T**he purpose of this article is to define the Forward Surgical Team (FST), delineate its mission, and explain how to use it to optimize combat casualty care for the supported maneuver unit. The intent is to give brigade, forward support battalion, and forward support medical company commanders an operational knowledge of the Army Forward Surgical Team.

Some basic definitions of hospitals and personnel are necessary. Any hospital, military or civilian, is set up to take care of injured personnel (i.e. car accident, gunshot wound, fragmentation wound) with standing operating procedures (SOPs) that are common to all hospitals. Casualties, or patients, first filter through the emergency room (ER). The emergency medicine doctor (EMD) does critical lifesaving procedures such as airway tubes, chest tubes, intravenous lines, blood transfusions, etc. These emergency room procedures save about 90 percent of the injured patients that enter the hospital. The remaining 10 percent require more advanced treatment and must move to the operating room (OR)

where the operating surgeon opens one or more major body cavities (MBC – defined as the head, chest, abdomen, or leg) in order to control internal bleeding and save the casualty's life. After the OR, the casualty is then transported to the post operative holding area for recovery and eventual discharge from the hospital. The OR is the ultimate lifesaving station. The OR is capable of everything the ER does with the added capability of opening an MBC for the control of bleeding and saving of life or limb.

Some critical definitions of the different doctors' capabilities within the ER and the OR should be defined. The emergency medicine doctor (EMD) works primarily in the ER. The EMD is capable of handling the entire spectrum of illnesses in all patient categories and age groups, short of surgically opening an MBC. Again, the EMD can save about 90 percent of casualties who come to the hospital. The operating surgeon is capable of doing everything the EMD does with the added capability of being able to open up an MBC in order to save lives.

The title "surgeon" in the Department of Defense should generally be interpreted as

meaning "doctor" or "physician." The title, 'Battalion Surgeon,' for example, does not imply that the individual holding that title is a qualified operating surgeon. Put another way, there are two types of 'surgeons' in the Army. There is a unit surgeon and an operating surgeon. Examples of unit surgeons are battalion surgeons, brigade surgeons, division surgeons, flight surgeons, and so forth. A unit 'surgeon' functions as an EMD. A unit surgeon/EMD is capable of handling that 90 percent of serious trauma casualties in the emergency room with very important and significant lifesaving maneuvers short of opening an MBC. An operating surgeon, on the other hand, is capable of everything the EMD does, however; he has spent an additional four to five years of intense, on-the-job training in a hospital, to learn the techniques and skills necessary to open an MBC in order to save a life. This training is called Surgical Residency training and correlates to Ranger School training extended over five years. Examples of operating surgeons are orthopedic surgeons, trauma surgeons



and cardiothoracic surgeons. The distinction between the ER and the OR, as well as the distinction between a unit 'surgeon' and an operating surgeon, are absolutely key to an understanding what an FST is and how to employ one.

A battalion aid station (BAS) and a forward support medical company (FSMC) all function just like a hospital ER. Advanced trauma life support (ATLS), which means all emergency trauma treatment short of opening an MBC, is the hallmark of the civilian ER, as well as the BAS and FSMC. Similarly, the unit surgeons that serve at BAS and FSMC levels function as highly-skilled EMDs with expertise in military injuries. The BAS is normally located at the battalion casualty collection point (CCP), and the FSMC is located in the brigade CCP, which is in the brigade support area (BSA).

From the 1950s through the 1980s, expert care by combat medics and rapid medical evacuation by air was counted upon to treat that 10 percent of casualties who could not be saved with 'emergency room' – that is, BAS or FSMC treatment alone. During that time, the operating room was only available at the division rear area from combat support hospitals (CSHs) and

mobile army surgical hospitals (MASHs). The division rear area was the farthest forward the MASH or the CSH could be deployed. Because of their large logistical footprint, even the smallest of these hospitals, the MASH, was not able to insert into the opening stages of a combat operation until D+4 or D+5. In the 1990s, with the Army deploying to remote areas with smaller than division-sized units around the world, the need for surgical capability with a much smaller logistical footprint became apparent. The Army fielded the modern FST in the early 1990s. This effectively pushed the operating room capability forward from the division rear to the brigade CCP and solved the treatment plan for that critically wounded 10 percent who could not survive transport to the CSH or MASH. The Forward Surgical Team, although limited to lifesaving surgery only, could be easily inserted with the initial assault force and deployed forward to the BSA.

## FST Mission, Concept, and Utilization

The Forward Surgical Team's mission is to deploy lifesaving operating room capability forward to the BSA for a limited period of time in order to save the lives of

those whose injuries are so severe that they would not survive transport to the rear area hospital. Once the combat offensive is over, the FST should then be moved back to a busy, high-volume hospital where surgeries are being performed, i.e., where the surgical skills it possesses are most needed. The FST is a surgical team, not a hospital, and is intended for offensive, not stability or peacekeeping operations.

Today's Army FST consists of 10 officers and 10 enlisted personnel. The doctors are all operating surgeons as opposed to unit surgeons. There are three trauma surgeons and one orthopedic surgeon assigned. The FST also has two nurse anesthetists, three additional nurses, one operations officer, as well as enlisted operating room technicians, practical nurses, and combat medics. An FST is not a hospital – a hospital must have depth in personnel and equipment in order to function independently. For example, it has to have X-ray, lab, medical maintenance and repair capability, power generation, food, water, and sterilization. To stay light and deployable, the FST lacks all of the above and contains only the personnel and equipment necessary to perform 30 lifesaving operations in 72 hours in support



*Members of an Army Forward Surgical Team perform two surgeries simultaneously in a Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter (DRASH) tent. The typical Forward Surgical Team has three DRASH tents: an Advanced Trauma Life Support or pre-operative tent, an operating room tent and a post operative holding tent.*

Courtesy photo



of a major offensive in a BSA. The FST is completely reliant on the FSMC and supported brigade for the full spectrum of logistical support.

Surgical operations consume a staggering amount of equipment, supplies, and human energy. After the initial period of 72 hours of continuous surgical operations, the FST is essentially non-mission capable due to exhausted equipment, supplies, and personnel. The team then needs to be reconstituted. The best way to do this is to physically move the team personnel and equipment back to the division rear combat support hospital where they can repack and re-sterilize their equipment, fix any broken equipment, and prepare to be repositioned in the BSA near the next major offensive where a high number of casualties may be encountered.

### Battlefield Placement

Movement and placement of the FST on the battlefield is obviously METT-T driven. Just as crew served weapons are placed where they will do the most good, the commander needs to place operating surgeons where they will do the most good as well. Most often, that is with the FSMC, at the most defensible logistics release point (i.e., the BSA) where there is immediate access to rapid evacuation to the rear. If casualties are being evacuated directly to the higher echelon hospital (CSH or MASH), the FST needs to be repositioned and collocated with that CSH or MASH. Except for echeloned movement, the Forward Surgical Team should never be split or employed as a Battalion Aid Station. It cannot be stated enough that leaving the FST in the BSA for prolonged periods with no incoming casualties is a waste of valuable Army resources. Operating surgeons, who have spent many years acquiring their valuable skills (and in which the Army has invested millions of dollars), should be positioned where the Army can maximally exploit those skills. Those skills, like those of the aviator, are highly perishable, and can only be sustained in a busy, high-volume hospital. That place could be the D-rear combat support hospital, or back in the home station hospital where they can perform surgery on Army dependents, Soldiers, and retirees with real-world peace time injuries and diseases.

The FST has no patient hold capabilities, and, by doctrine, must evacuate the patients it operates on within six to eight hours. As such, it should be positioned near evacuation assets, preferably dedicated fixed and/or rotary wing air ambulances. 'Sick call', per se, is not a function of the FST. The FST can assist with sick call if the unit surgeons are overwhelmed, however; assigning an FST to perform sick call as a primary mission is another serious pitfall in FST employment, which results in misuse of valuable Army resources.

Not every maneuver brigade requires an attached Forward Surgical Team. If a CSH, MASH, or level 3 hospital is within an hour's flight or ground evacuation time to the brigade's area of responsibility, then that brigade does not require an attached FST.

The Forward Surgical Team is a highly valuable asset to the



Staff Sergeant Jeffrey A. Wolfe

*At a hospital in Kirkuk, Iraq, Major Ben Starnes, 250th Forward Surgical Team, and Iraqi Doctor Nadim Ibrahim scrub up and talk strategy before beginning a procedure to remove a tumor from the lung of an Iraqi man December 9.*

maneuver brigade combat team, when employed correctly and in accordance to Army doctrine. Not only are lives saved, but combat power is ultimately preserved through the use of skilled surgical assets for severely wounded casualties who would not otherwise survive evacuation to a division level MASH or CSH. Equally important is the correct positioning of the FST after combat operations are completed, so that the team can be ready and its unique skills preserved for the next combat mission.

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**Colonel (Dr.) Harry K. Stinger** is currently serving as the commander of the 250th Forward Surgical Team (Airborne) at Fort Lewis, Washington. Stinger, a general and trauma surgeon, deployed the 250th with the 173d Airborne Brigade in March 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a Ranger School graduate and has spent three years assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment as a unit surgeon. He received his MD degree from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and completed his surgical residency at Boston University Medical Center.

**Lieutenant Colonel (Dr.) Robert M. Rush** is a general and trauma surgeon stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. He is a 1986 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. Rush has deployed on numerous Forward Surgical Team missions including both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He received his MD degree from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and completed his surgical residency at Ohio State University Medical Center.

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# Defeating an Ambush - Vietnam

SECOND LIEUTENANT JAMES A. CAPOBIANCO

As America strove to maintain law and order in the streets of Iraq, our forces encountered hostile fire at the average rate of 35 attacks per day. Enemy guerilla forces used a myriad of tactics and techniques to overcome the superior fire capabilities and training of the American Soldier. Among the most effective and deadly was the ambush. This hit and run tactic is nothing new, and the enemy should not be given too much credit for its successful execution. The devastation wrought by a mass concentration of fires at a moment of surprise is felt both psychologically and physically. Despite its lethality and effectiveness, the ambush **CAN BE DEFEATED**.

Combatants throughout history have encountered ambushes. Lessons have been learned, forgotten, and relearned. Each lesson has come at the ultimate price; it is foolhardy not to revisit and reexamine the lessons gained by those who came before us. Of particular pertinence are the experiences of the American infantryman in Vietnam, and the lessons he learned while bravely facing the Viet Cong (VC) and their relentless implementation of the ambush.

The North Vietnamese fighting forces quickly realized that they could not defeat the Americans in a conventional manner. Instead the VC turned to guerilla type tactics, including the ambush. While the American infantryman had received training in ambush countermeasures, the mounting casualty lists illustrated that a thorough understanding was held by few. Efforts were increased to insure that all Army leaders were proficient in preventing and reacting to an ambush. Army leaders analyzed the after action reviews of units which had successfully defeated enemy ambushes. The common fundamentals which proved decisive in these encounters were proper tactical formations during element maneuver, preplanned and properly trained reaction forces, and the deliberate incorporation of immediate action drills at both the individual and unit level.

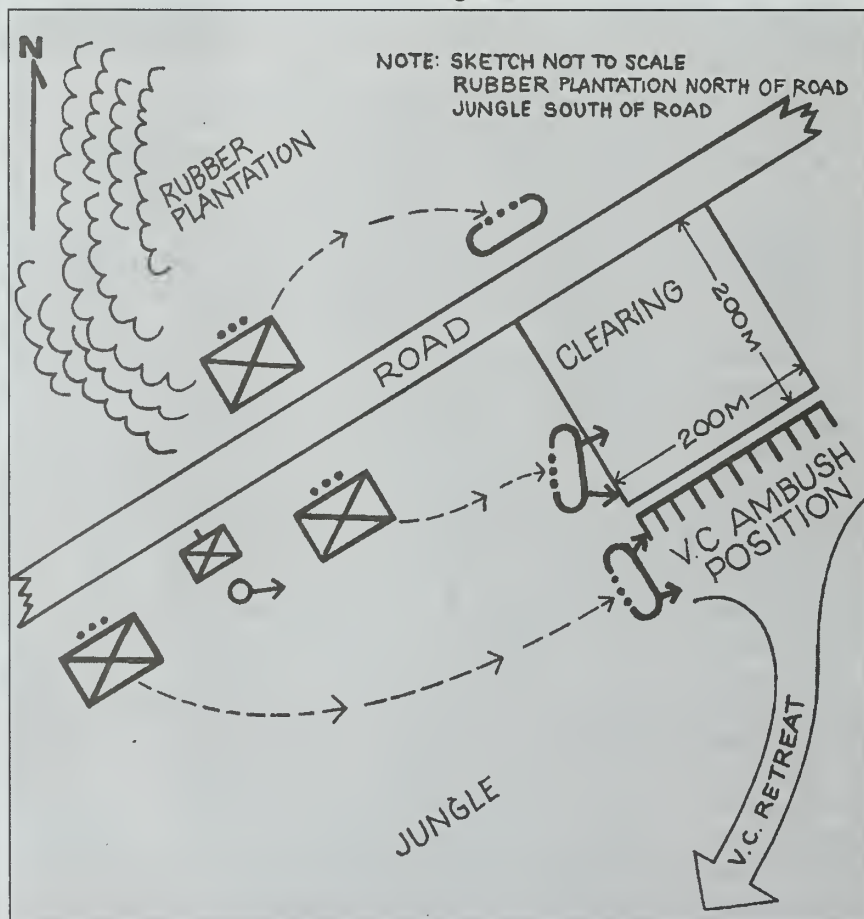
At the onset of the war, both American and South Vietnamese government troops were routinely caught blindly entering the kill zone of enemy ambush sites. They lacked adequate preplanned defensive measures while maneuvering through potential enemy positions. One of the first documented cases of a successful defeat of a VC ambush was executed by a South Vietnamese infantry company commanded by a Lieutenant Dong. The company had reached its objective and was returning to its base camp when it encountered an enemy ambush. (See Figure 1.) The VC, having observed the company on its route to the objective, were certain that it would return via the same route.

As such, the VC positioned two platoons with automatic weapons in dense foliage overlooking a clearing on the side of the road. From their vantage point, the VC had a clear line of sight to a distance of 200 meters. Lieutenant Dong, aware that his unit was maneuvering through a hostile area, organized his element with the following preplanned defensive measures in mind:

- Avoid the open road;
- Keep your unit dispersed into areas of cover and concealment;
- Post rear and flank security and ensure that a portion of your element is available as a reserve; and
- Have a pre-established response should you encounter enemy contact, and react quickly.

These sound tactics allowed Lieutenant Dong to gain contact with the enemy's flank rather than the intended kill zone and placed him in a position to launch a successful counterattack. The result of which yielded seven enemy dead, and captured enemy equipment and documents. There were no government casualties.

Figure 1





The growing effectiveness of VC ambushes also mandated that reacting forces alter the organization of their maneuver elements. Based on the successful experiences of American and government units, convoy formations were to be designed with the following seven principles:

- ① Wherever possible, units should elect to use a tactical column.
- ② The march interval should be large enough to permit each vehicle to maneuver, but not be so large as to prevent vehicles from being able to rapidly respond to the aid of an engaged friendly element.
- ③ Convoys with two or more vehicles require an advance guard or scout element; the advance guard should not precede the main element by more than three minutes.
- ④ All formations should have a rear guard.
- ⑤ All formations should have flank security.
- ⑥ Formations must ensure unit integrity with commanders well forward in the column, but not with the lead element.
- ⑦ One armed escort should be placed with the lead element one third of the way back from the lead vehicle; one armed escort should be located in the rear.

Additionally, patterns of movement or activities must not be allowed to develop. If at all possible, units must not return by the same route. Security elements must check out all suspected ambush areas prior to the advance of the main element. The proper use of scouts, security, and planning will minimize the surprise element of an enemy ambush and give units the ability to aggressively counterattack.

Another recommendation was the implementation of a reaction force. Every unit must train and prepare a reaction force whose mission is to engage and destroy ambush or attacking elements. This quick reaction force (QRF) should be designed with simplicity, be

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**Units must deliberately train to react to an ambush. Each individual must react automatically and aggressively. This is perhaps the most critical response to surviving an enemy ambush and must be stressed as such.**

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preplanned, and be thoroughly trained to:

- Locate and maintain contact with the attacking enemy;
- Block enemy withdrawal routes;
- Prevent the enemy from entering populated areas; and

- Encircle, attack, and destroy the enemy.

An effective QRF is not only advantageous to unit security and the defeat of an enemy ambush, but also acts as an invaluable deterrent.

Units must deliberately train to react to an ambush. Each individual must react automatically and aggressively. This is perhaps the most critical response to surviving an enemy ambush and must be stressed as such. The immediate action drill should complement the preplanned actions of the QRF. The attacked unit must return fire with such ferocity and violence that the ambush

party itself becomes fixed. They must maintain contact once the enemy withdraws, allowing the QRF to locate and destroy the enemy. As Captain G. D. Livingston stated, "If these anti-ambush techniques are mastered, victory will be possible, without them disaster is certain."

As another conceptual tool for the combat Soldier in Vietnam, Lieutenant Colonel Christian F. Dubia recommended four basic tenets to survive and defeat an enemy ambush. He used the acronym ARMS as a method of recalling these fundamentals.

"Avoid the killing zone. Elements within the killing zone must move forward out of the area of fire; those behind it must stop short of it.

Return fire immediately. A large volume of fire should be started instinctively even before the exact locations of the ambushing forces are determined.

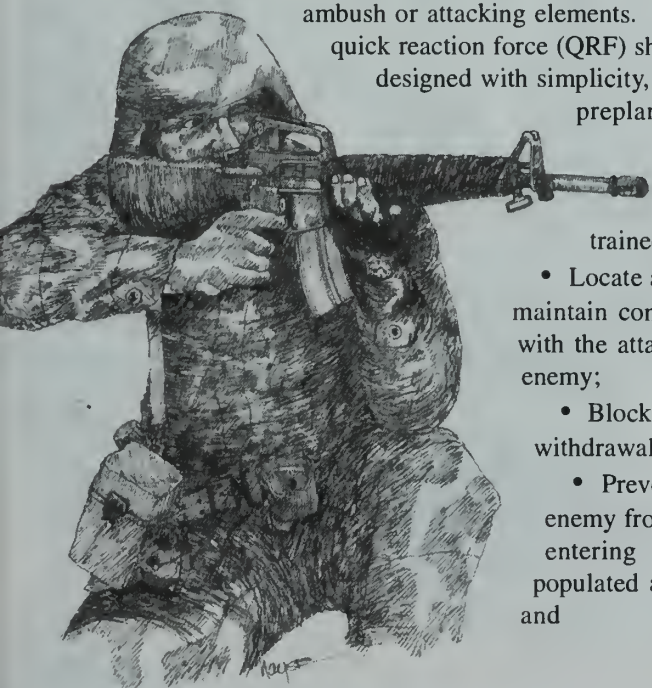
Move selected elements aggressively against the flanks or rear of the principle enemy position.

Secure flanks and rear against follow-up attacks from different directions than those of the initial fires."

U.S. forces are presently facing situations which are similar to those encountered decades ago in Vietnam. While the places, people, equipment, and technology have changed, the fundamental tactics have not. Enemy ambush remains an effective and deadly means of engaging American forces. However, as learned and demonstrated in Vietnam, by following the prescribed fundamentals and reacting with complete VIOLENCE OF ACTION, the ambush CAN BE DEFEATED.

*"The infantry must move in order to close with the enemy. It must shoot in order to move. To halt under fire is folly. To halt under fire and not fire back is suicide."*

— General George S. Patton, Jr.



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Second Lieutenant James A. Capobianco is graduate of Fort Benning's Officer Candidate School. He has a master's degree in international studies and is currently serving as a research assistant with *Infantry Magazine*.

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# Conducting Vehicle Checkpoints In Kosovo

CAPTAIN ERIK KRIVDA  
FIRST LIEUTENANT KAMIL SZTALKOPER

Conducting vehicle checkpoints (VCPs) in Kosovo is a standard procedure used in an attempt to catch smuggled weapons or cargo. However, after 20 minutes of standing up a vehicle checkpoint, the VCP is no longer effective. Smugglers today in Kosovo are much smarter than in 1999, and over the years have developed multiple tactics to avoid the Kosovo Force (KFOR) or other law enforcement agencies. This is mainly due to the flood of cell phones used by Kosovars living or traveling in the area of operation. Two distinct tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) are used for vehicle smuggling in Kosovo. One is using a small nondescript car driven by one passenger carrying a cell phone driving ahead of the cargo truck actively looking for any KFOR, United Nations Civilian Police (CIVPOL) or Kosovo Police Service (KPS) checkpoints in the area. This vehicle is typically able to spot the VCP, move through it, and then call back to the truck

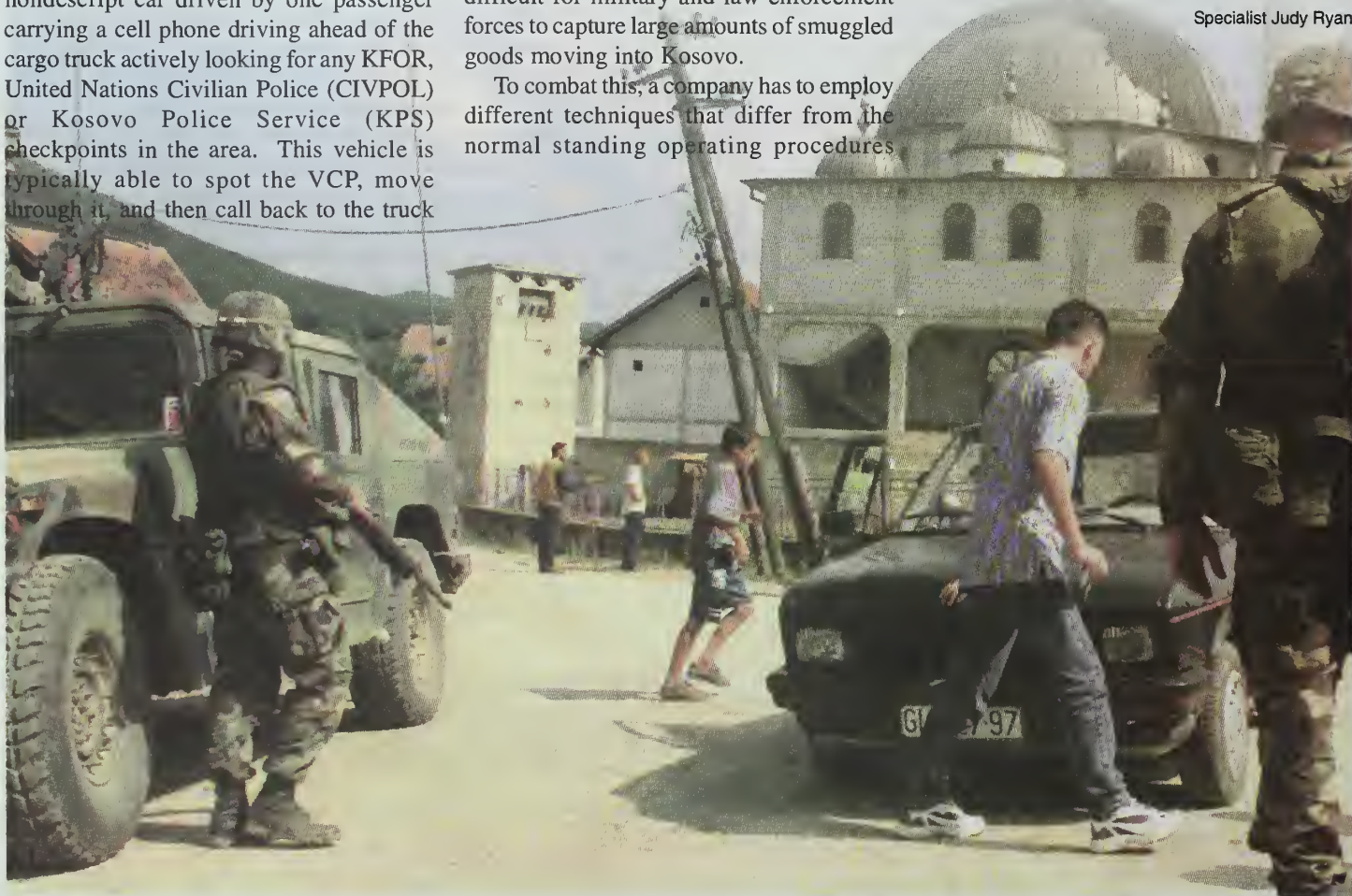
carrying cargo alerting them not to continue moving along the current route. The cargo truck will take one of two actions, either stop movement along that route altogether by halting at a local café and hiding the truck, or it will move to an alternate route, if available, to bypass this VCP. The second TTP used by smugglers in Kosovo is to pay people living on or around smuggling routes to call the smugglers the moment KFOR, CIVPOL, or KPS enters the town or sector. This is relatively easy in some areas since the road networks are relatively limited, and in many border areas there are only one or two routes into the border crossing areas. With these TTPs, it is very difficult for military and law enforcement forces to capture large amounts of smuggled goods moving into Kosovo.

To combat this, a company has to employ different techniques that differ from the normal standing operating procedures

(SOPs) of conducting VCPs. Three distinct types of VCPs worked well at surprising smugglers, and Soldiers were able to seize large amounts of smuggled goods attempting to come into Kosovo illegally. Each type of VCP uses a similar base task organization of a find, fix, and finish force; however, the locations and insertions were unique to each operation. There is one major problem with all three of these techniques — communication. Due to the rugged terrain in Kosovo, dismounted communications using the AN/PRC-119 were very ineffective for communication

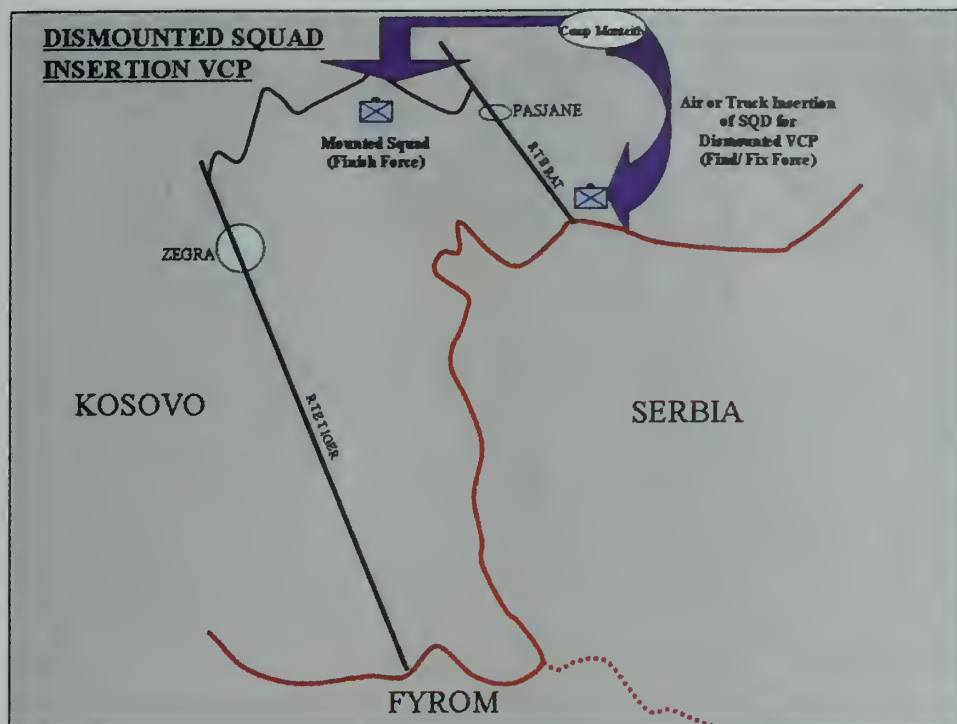
*U.S. Army Soldiers watch vehicles approach a checkpoint near Vitina, Kosovo.*

Specialist Judy Ryan





## DISMOUNTED SQUAD INSERTION VCP



back to the company command post. This caused a heavy reliance on either the non-secure Motorola STX-3000, which has a repeater network throughout the sector, or it requires a vehicle mounted section to provide relay capability to the squad on the ground.

## DISMOUNTED SQUAD INSERTION

This technique was able to easily insert a squad into a known smuggling route using a key light infantry tactic of infiltration. This technique uses a squad as both the find and fix force. The mission would be given to a platoon to insert a squad to observe and stop all cargo trucks, 4x4 vehicles, or vans moving throughout the area. The platoon would insert the squad into the area in one of three methods:

- \* A 5-ton truck insertion a few terrain features away allows the squad to enter the suspected smuggling area dismounted, therefore not alerting any of the local inhabitants of the presence of KFOR in the sector.

- \* An air insertion of the dismounted squad uses a similar location for insertion as the 5-ton insertion with the available air resources in place of vehicles.

- \* A feint could be employed. This would be to move two squads into the smuggling area mounted, set up a VCP for 30 minutes with one squad, while the other squad moves into a hidden location to remain after the squad conducting the VCP leaves the area. This gives the local Kosovars living in the area the impression that KFOR has left the area. In addition, if there is anyone working for the smugglers, they will notify anyone

wanting to enter the area that KFOR has departed and is no longer in the area.

The finish force would be comprised of one squad that remains mounted. This force should be located in the vicinity of the smuggling sector but not too close to where the squad is deterring smugglers from entering the area. The best use for the finishing force is to locate this element in a hidden location a few miles away or on a hilltop as a relay station for the squad on the ground. Once the dismounted squad identifies a suspect vehicle, the squad executes a no notice VCP along the road. This, for obvious reasons, can be a very dangerous task if the squad does not have enough time to present itself on the road and allow the vehicle some room to slow down and stop. In addition, at night each member should wear a road guard vest and either attach a chemlight or a flashlight to their LBV once they reach the road. Once the dismounted squad element halts the vehicle and finds contraband material, the finishing force (the mounted squad) is called forward. The mounted force's role is to take charge of the scene and either transport the captured smugglers and material to the detention facility, or to assist the dismounted squad in securing the scene until CIVPOL and KPS arrive to hand the detainees over to civil authorities for criminal prosecution.

## OBSERVATION POST VCP





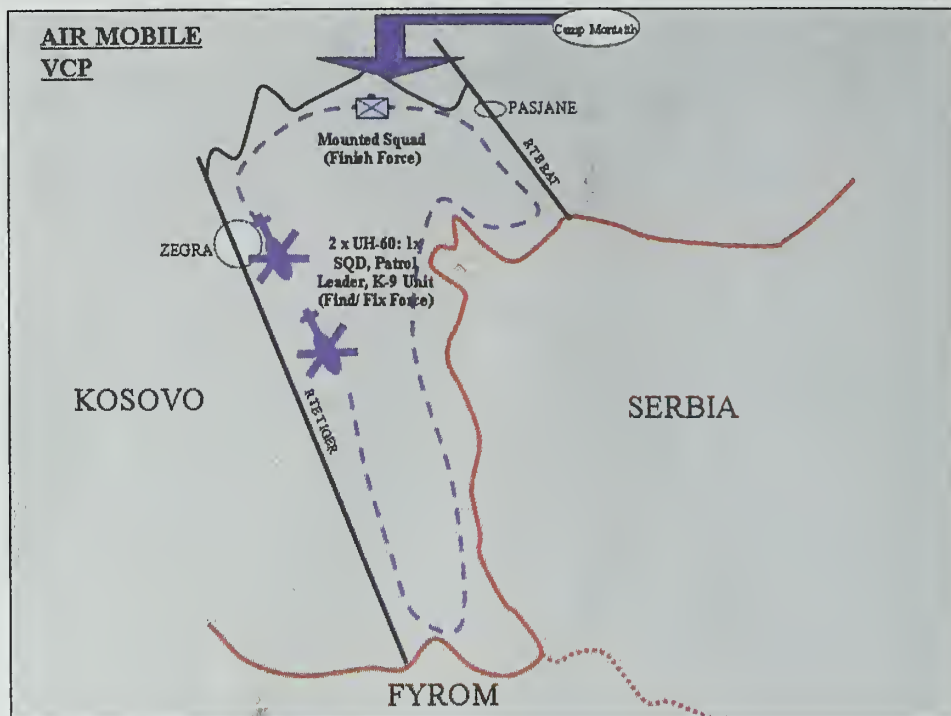
## OBSERVATION POST VCP

The observation post VCP is similar to the dismounted squad insertion team method with the exception that the fixing and finishing elements are combined into one squad. This technique uses one forward squad or fire team occupying a concealed observation post monitoring traffic at either a border crossing point, or a known smuggling route. Once a suspicious vehicle is spotted, the squad radios to the mounted element a description of the vehicle, and approximate time of arrival to the mounted element's location. The mounted element, which is hidden off the main road, moves onto the main road and establishes a hasty VCP to stop and search the suspect vehicle. Once a vehicle is caught carrying contraband items, the mounted section will either transport the captured vehicle and personnel to the KFOR detention facility or await CIVPOL/ KPS to arrive and detain the smugglers and vehicles for a criminal violation.

## AIR MOBILE VCP

This is the most resource intensive VCP a unit can conduct. The VCP consists of one mounted element (finishing force) placed in a hidden location somewhere along the Air Mobile patrol route. Two UH-60 helicopters (finding force) to fly a fixed route for patrol. One squad and a command and control (C2) element (fixing force) riding in the UH-60s able to land, stop, and search the vehicle. This squad, like any of the VCPs, can be augmented with MP drug or explosive dog teams.

Operation of an Air Mobile VCP is normally restricted in bad weather conditions, but can be very effective if properly executed. The conduct of the VCP involves about three to four hours of flight time, and typically the UH-60s will have to return to base and refuel after two hours of flight. The company would conduct these operations with a nine-man rifle squad and the company commander or executive officer (patrol leader) riding in the lead helicopter. The trail helicopter was normally one narcotics K-9 team, one explosive K-9 team, and the company executive officer or platoon leader (assistant patrol leader). The UH-60s would conduct a flight over specific major roads in a sector known for smuggling (300-500 feet).



During these flights, the company commander or executive officer (patrol leader) would remain in the far right rear seat wearing a headset to talk with the pilots. The UH-60 would maintain a flight path that would keep the road off the right hand side of the helicopter, allowing the patrol leader to watch for suspected smuggling vehicles driving on the road, and alert the pilots of the vehicle. The pilots would then look for a suitable landing zone for the helicopters far enough ahead of the vehicle to allow time for the Soldiers to dismount the helicopter and reach the road to stop the vehicle.

Once on the ground, the squad first dismounts and moves to the road to stop the vehicle. The second helicopter would then land and only dismount the K-9 teams. The assistant patrol leader would remain in the helicopter to assist the squad on the ground and relay any communication to either the company TOC or mounted squad in sector. When contraband material was discovered inside vehicles, the assistant patrol leader would alert both the mounted element in sector and the company TOC. A key element during an air mobile VCP is communication. Establishing communication between the dismount elements in the two helicopters is a critical task. Being able to talk on a private net separate from the pilots allows the dismount squad leader and mission leader to discuss their

plan and acquire targets. The patrol leader would talk the mounted squad into the fixing force's location and if needed request the QRF or CIVPOL/ KPS through the company TOC. The mounted element, already out in sector, would be the fastest element to arrive on scene and would release the Air Mobile section to re-board the UH-60s without wasting blade time of the helicopters. This allowed the Air Mobile VCP to continue mission in other areas of the sector while the mounted element secured the vehicles and personnel until the arrival of either the battalion quick reaction force (QRF) or CIVPOL/KPS depending on the type of contraband found.

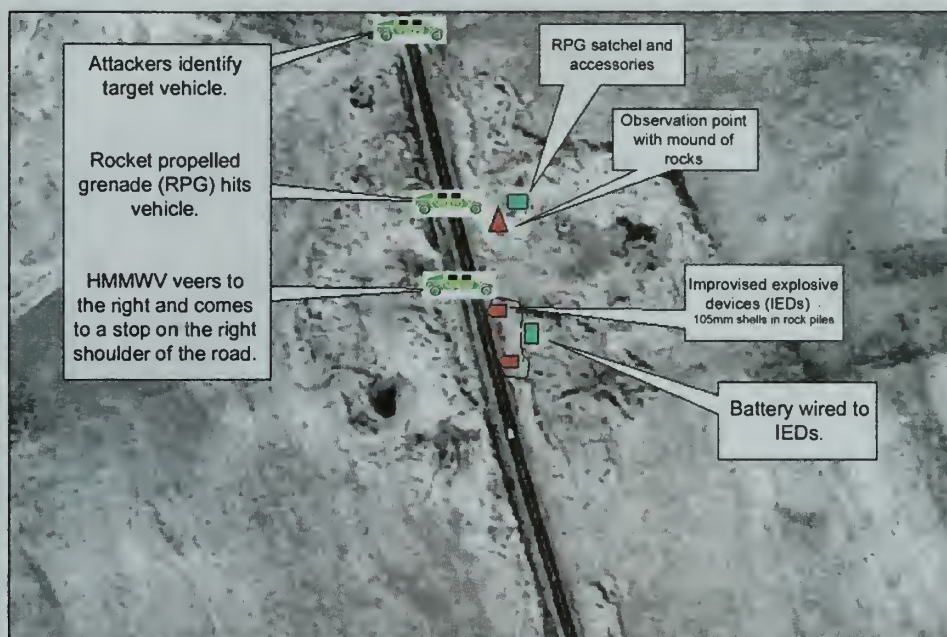
Using a combination of each of these VCPs, in addition to standard VCP operations, typically created enough change in tactics to keep the smugglers in sector, guessing and provided opportunities to capture numerous amounts of contraband items in sector. These three VCP techniques are not the only ways to operate in Kosovo; however, they differ just enough in execution to catch smugglers when they least expect it.

**Captain Erik Krivda** is currently serving as the commander of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. **First Lieutenant Kamil Sztalkoper** served as a rifle platoon leader with C Co. 2d Bn., 2d Inf. during a nine-month deployment to Kosovo and is currently the unit's executive officer.



# Execution of a Vehicular Ambush in Iraq

U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq regularly face ambushes and hostile fire.  
The following vehicular ambush occurred July 21, 2003.



Shortly after sunup, a convoy was moving north, approaching a road cut through a small hill. The area is relatively flat, with several small rises giving a good view of the ambush site. An ambusher at the observation point was evidently supposed to alert the trigger man at the battery when vehicles were in the kill zone, but for some reason was not ready when the lead vehicle approached. The wires were not yet attached at the battery site, and as the vehicles passed one of the ambushers crouching off to the left (west) side of the road, he fired an RPG at the second vehicle, a high mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV). He then fired several rounds from his AK-47 rifle at the convoy and fled, probably in a vehicle hidden behind the hill. The RPG struck the HMMWV just behind the driver's door and its blast effect traversed the rear of the vehicle, exiting near the right rear tailgate. Swerving to a stop, the vehicle halted several feet from the first IED — a 105mm projectile — which was never detonated. The IEDs, detonators, and other accessories were recovered at the scene.

Ambushes of this type are common, because they can be quickly emplaced with minimal assets by relatively unskilled personnel with a well-rehearsed escape plan. This attack — although limited to the destruction of one vehicle — highlights the need for detailed route reconnaissance and flank security when passing through defiles. The likelihood of an ambush when a convoy is using a route for the first time is small, but once an enemy realizes the route is in regular use, he will figure out a way to attack us. In this case, it would have been difficult to detect the IEDs or enemy personnel, given the darkness and restricted visibility in the defile. The interval between vehicles was important as well, because the dispersion prevented greater damage to Soldiers and vehicles.





After being struck by the RPG round, the HMMWV veered to the right off the road and then back to the left facing the east. The vehicle stopped two feet in front of the first IED.

The proximity of the damaged HMMWV to the first IED is shown at right.



A close-up of one of the IEDs.



The buried wire from the second IED is obvious here, but it shows the attackers' attention to detail, and would have been virtually invisible at the time of the ambush.





# TF 1-15

## An Infantry Task Force Goes to War

ARTHUR A. DURANTE

**T**his is the story of one infantry battalion task force and its introduction to combat operations during the opening stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although the experiences of the Soldiers in this unit are unique, the issues and adversity they faced and the ways in which they faced them, coped with them, and overcame them are not. Task Force 1-15 Infantry was one of nine armor and mechanized infantry task forces in the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) during the war in Iraq. All faced the same desert, the same fears, and the same enemy. This is one story. There are many others.

The 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry is part of the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. Lieutenant Colonel John Charlton took command of the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry in July 2002 and led it during the six-month rotational deployment of the unit to Kuwait from May to October of 2002. After the battalion returned to Fort Benning in October, it had only a short time to enjoy family and home before world events called for it to deploy back to Kuwait in January 2003 as the crisis

with Saddam Hussein heated up.

### Living and Training in the Desert

Before leaving Fort Benning, the infantry Soldiers of the battalion were joined by tankers, engineers, air defenders, and many others to create what became known as Task Force 1-15. When TF 1-15 Infantry arrived back in Kuwait on January 9, it was sent immediately to Camp New Jersey, located in the stark Kuwaiti desert. This camp was originally built to house a battalion task force, but during the build-up to the Iraq war the entire 3rd Brigade Combat Team (3rd BCT) of the 3rd Infantry Division was located there. The camp was extremely crowded.

After a short while at Camp New Jersey, the unit was moved to a bare spot in the desert designated Assembly Area Maine. The unit was in Assembly Area Maine for almost six weeks. It was here the unit made its final preparations for going to war.

The unit spent almost three months living in the desert under very austere conditions, becoming familiarized with the conditions and building unit cohesion.

Security was very tight, and only the commander and his staff were allowed to know the details of the plans for the invasion of Iraq. Eventually, as the "G-Day" (the start of the ground invasion) came closer and closer, he was allowed first to bring his company commanders into the planning process and eventually his Soldiers a few days before they crossed over into Iraq.

When the embedded media personnel arrived and were assigned to the various units within the 3rd BCT, LTC Charlton knew that the invasion was near. His unit had three embedded media personnel, one from the *Stars and Stripes*, one from Radio Free Europe, and Oliver Poole from the *London Daily Telegraph*.

While they were in the desert camps, the task force elements conducted extensive live fire and force-on-force training. The defense contractors that worked in Kuwait were a great help in getting the battalion ready. They built a mock village for platoon and company level training and even a realistic trench complex. The unit conducted almost a month of urban operations training at these various facilities.





Specialist Robert Liddy

*3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) Soldiers stand guard inside their Bradley fighting vehicle.*

## Vehicles and Equipment

At Fort Benning, the battalion had been equipped with some of the newest versions of the Bradley fighting vehicle, but when it arrived in Kuwait it had to draw vehicles stored there for contingencies.

Once the battalion had drawn the older vehicles, it immediately set about removing the seats and replacing them with a fabricated bench seat made from plywood that had a hinged top and allowed storage of additional ammunition inside. They also built metal racks on the outside of the vehicles to carry additional equipment and the Soldiers' rucksacks and duffle bags.

Although they were older models, the Bradley fighting vehicles, and in fact, all the combat vehicles that Charlton's unit drew in Kuwait were well-maintained and in good shape.

## Waiting to Move Out

Eventually, as the training progressed and the battalion became more and more proficient, they began to run out of things to do. There was only so much training on urban operations that could be done before it began to become repetitious, and the live fire ranges were no longer available as other units such as the 101st

Airborne Division had begun to arrive and needed to train on them. The waiting was stressful, and everyone was eager to start — to get what appeared to everyone to be inevitable over with.

Surprising to many, the weather during January, February, and early March was quite cold in the Kuwaiti desert. There was a significant amount of rain and several dust storms. By mid March, the Soldiers were tired of being cold and wet and were anxious to get moving. They were trained to a high degree of proficiency and were ready to move out of the uncomfortable surroundings of Assembly Area Maine. Later, they would recall the conditions there with fondness, but that still lay in the future. At that time, there was a noticeable tension in the air. The task force was ready to leave Kuwait, to move out north, to drive on to Baghdad.

The battalion commander tried to take his unit on a long cross country movement, early in March, but was told that the 3rd Infantry Division did not want him to put that much wear on his vehicles so that they would be ready when the time came to cross into Iraq.

## Moving Out of Assembly Area Maine

Because of the tight security levels that were maintained for so long, LTC Charlton was worried about not having enough rehearsal time for his subordinate units to go over their parts of the plan and to finish all the last minute preparation they needed.

Regardless of whether they had completed their rehearsals or not, the Soldiers of the task force all left from Assembly Area Maine to a more forward assembly area on March 18. From there, they moved into the attack position the next day. Movement was very slow and complicated on the nights of the 18th and 19th because of the hundreds and hundreds of vehicles from all sorts of units that were moving into positions all over the desert.

The task force completed movement into its attack position on the evening of March 19. The engineer vehicles that had been working to clear the barriers on the Kuwaiti side of the berm were moving out of position and other engineers were moving forward.

One of the serials of TF 1-15 Infantry was near an engineer unit that had a false alarm from its NBC warning equipment. The unit immediately stopped and began to put on masks and protective suits. This stopped all the units behind it, and the effect rippled down the long columns. Somehow, in the confusion, there was a break in contact among the TF 1-15 Infantry convoy, and things were very confused for a long time.

Despite all this, and due in great part to the hard work of dozens of senior NCOs, TF 1-15 Infantry finally closed into its attack positions at 2100 hours on the evening of March 19. LTC Charlton immediately ordered all personnel to begin a sleep rotation program so that the unit could move out the next morning as fresh as possible.

## Crossing the Berm and Entering Iraq

At 0600 hours on March 20, TF 1-15 Infantry crossed the berm into Iraq. The task force packed supplies of food and water into every vehicle. Cases of Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) were crammed into every nook and cranny, along with boxes of bottled water. In addition to all its extra ammunition, the unit carried a replacement chemical protective suit for every one of its Soldiers. The mess



sections of each company even had the heavy mobile kitchen trailers with them.

There was extra fuel over and above that carried in the unit's highly mobile HEMMTs (highly mobile tactical cargo and fuel trucks). This was loaded in the 5,000-gallon tankers moving with the task force trains. The HEMMTs did well during the entire war, going everywhere the tracked vehicles went.

Once through the narrow crossing points that had been opened by the engineers, the task force elements rendezvoused at a designated checkpoint and moved into a broad formation designed to shorten the length of the column as it moved over 200 kilometers towards its first objective.

### The Drive Across the Desert

Task Force 1-15 Infantry moved across the desert before making a stop where the combat vehicle crewmen test-fired all their weapons.

The deep sand along the route began to bog the wheeled vehicles down. The section sergeants and drivers of the resupply vehicles, and the engineers with their bulky equipment, fought the soft sand, but they fell further and further behind schedule.

At about 1300 hours on March 20, LTC Charlton ordered an unscheduled stop to allow the task force trains to catch up with the combat elements. He could not stay in this position as long as he wanted to because of the need to get into position to attack the first objective, but he did let the trains vehicles close the gap somewhat. By this time, it had widened to more than 100 kilometers. He eventually felt that he had to continue to move, and he left his S3 officer, Major Pete Biagiotti, behind along with a radio retrans team from the communications platoon to assist the trailing elements.

LTC Charlton, and the combat elements of TF 1-15 Infantry closed into Assault Position Baldwin, about 75 kilometers from An Nasyriah, at approximately 1500 hours. At that point, he was very low on fuel for the M1 tanks. He was able to fill approximately 2/3 of his tanks with fuel from his HEMMT tankers before they ran dry. With the back-up 5,000-gallon tankers far behind in the desert, he was forced to ask his sister battalion, TF 1-30 Infantry (commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Wes



*Reprinted with permission from the Stars and Stripes, a DoD publication. ©2003 Stars and Stripes Private Brian Bollan, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, readies his equipment on his Humvee gunner position during the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

Gillman) for help. Task Force 1-30 had found a route with slightly less sand, had used less fuel, and was able to spare 1,000 gallons.

The task force commander knew that this was not enough, but that in order to keep the (fairly complicated) brigade plan from falling apart, he would have to move soon. He called Command Sergeant Major Michael Howard, his senior noncommissioned officer, and told him to "Scrounge fuel!" The resourceful CSM soon found the 3rd BCT's Forward Logistic Element (FLE) and was able to get a HEMMT full of the precious liquid. It wasn't much, but it was enough.

### The Initial Maneuvers into Position

Although the movement through the desert had been arduous, 3rd BCT arrived in the vicinity of its first objective roughly on schedule. Because of the distances involved, and perhaps the nature of the terrain around the city, they all approached An Nasyriah independently.

Colonel Daniel Allyn, the 3rd BCT commander, was out of voice contact with his tactical command post, and although LTC Charlton could communicate with the command post himself, he too was not able to reach COL Allyn. Even with no clear voice links to each other, the systems recently installed on key vehicles within each task force allowed an unprecedented

degree of synchronization among the widely separated units.

The actual town of An Nasyriah itself was not the 3rd BCT objective. There were three major areas outside the town that were the focus of COL Allyn and his task force commanders. The first was Objective FIREBIRDS, which was Tallil Air Base, a major command and control center for the Iraqi Air Force. The second was Objective LIBERTY, the headquarters compound of the Iraqi army's 11th Infantry Division that also contained barracks and motor pools for at least one armor battalion. The third objective, designated Objective CLAY, was a bridge over the Euphrates about 10 kilometers upriver from the town of An Nasyriah itself.

At this time in the war, the commanders still thought that most of the Iraqi forces that were in Tallil Airbase and in the 11th Division compound would capitulate without fighting. In fact, each commander had been issued a detailed "Capitulation Packet" with extensive instructions on how to arrange and accept the capitulation of large Iraqi units.

COL Allyn had expressed his concerns to LTC Charlton that he did not want the movements of TF 1-15 Infantry into its blocking positions to be so aggressive and so close to the 11th Division compound or to the airbase that they initiated a fight before any capitulation agreements could be reached. Although he supported the 3rd



BCT commander's wish for a peaceful resolution in the vicinity of An Nasyriah, LTC Charlton devised a plan for his units that positioned them either to accept the Iraqi surrenders or to fight, whatever the eventuality.

After stopping for a short time in an assembly area about 75 kilometers from the objective complex at An Nasyriah, TF 1-15 Infantry crossed the final line of departure (LD) at 1800 hours and moved to and around the southern fringe of Objective FIREBIRDS. The route on which the task force moved was a major, six-lane, divided highway. There was a huge sand berm around the entire airbase. LTC Charlton estimated it to be at least 20-feet high. This limited movement into, or out of, the base.

At the large circular intersection south and slightly west of Objective FIREBIRDS, LTC Charlton made the turn north and immediately set up for his final refueling before the battle. The fuel that he and his Sergeant Major had searched for so frantically earlier in the day was pumped into the thirsty tanks and armored fighting vehicles of the task force.

### First Enemy Contact

The plan did not work out as it was conceived. Instead of finding large Iraqi units willing to capitulate, Company A, 1-15 Infantry found that many small enemy units were willing to fight. The company made immediate enemy contact and drew fire as soon as it moved away from the main highway. Captain Todd Ballou had his lead platoon return fire, which was mostly from small arms, RPGs (rocket propelled grenades) and heavy machine guns.

A section of the task force scout platoon had been detached from securing the still-delayed unit trains and had come forward to join the combat elements. The long-range optics of the scouts' LRASSS (Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System) identified multiple enemy personnel and vehicles within the Tallil Airbase compound and CPT Ballou brought them under indirect fire from the battalion mortars and from the howitzers of 1-10th Field Artillery battalion.

Despite the direct and indirect fires against them, the Iraqi forces put up a fierce resistance, and in fact, began to advance against the Americans. The fighting

around Company A's position just to the west of Objective FIREBIRDS began to build in intensity. CPT Philippone, moving his Company B past Company A was drawn into the fight and soon there were two companies engaging the Iraqi light forces coming out of the Tallil Air Base area.

LTC Charlton did not want to get bogged down in a fight at this location. He had several other areas around the two objectives that he needed to occupy, and he ordered CPT Philippone to disengage and move north to the road running along the river heading west out of An Nasyriah.

The Bradley fighting vehicles of Company B gradually began to move back, passing the fight over to Company A. As he began to move north, CPT Philippone was confronted with a confusing and challenging situation. The road his unit was using was not as good a route as it had appeared to be on the overhead imagery. It was narrow and hard to move on, especially now that it had begun to get dark. The ground off the sides of the route was swampy and crisscrossed with irrigation ditches that were hard to see in the gathering gloom.

As he slowly picked his way north, CPT

Philippone began to encounter groups of Iraqis that were trying to surrender. However, not all were so inclined, and he was still making significant contact with groups that were determined to fight. This mix of Iraqis that clearly wanted to surrender and those that clearly didn't presented quite a complicated issue. The company tried as best it could to separate the two groups. As the prisoners began to accumulate, more and more men had to be allocated to guard and move them.

### Tank-on-Tank Battle at Objective LIBERTY

While Company B was trying to sort out the problem of surrendering Iraqis mixed with those still fighting, CPT Dave Waldron's tank team moved closer to Objective LIBERTY. This was part of LTC Charlton's plan to put units into position to be able either to accept a unit's surrender or to engage a unit that was combative. He did not know what the situation was, nor what the enemy forces were, in Objective LIBERTY, so he sent up the heavy team to take a look. What the tankers found gave him the first shock of the night.

As soon as Company B, 1-64 Armor







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***3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) Soldiers, return fire after being ambushed in southern Iraq during the opening days of the war.***

moved to where it had line-of-sight to Objective LIBERTY, it discovered that the Iraqis had moved an armored force into prepared fighting positions around the perimeter. These tanks were hot spots in the thermal sights of the M1 Abrams of Company B, proof that their engines were running, and they were combat ready.

The message CPT Waldron sent was short and sweet. It didn't need to be any longer, everyone who heard it knew exactly what he meant. LTC Charlton remembers the message vividly. It came over the radio loud and clear, "Dragon 6, Knight 6. Tanks! Out." With that, the fighting kicked into a higher gear.

The Iraqis in the tanks dug in around Objective LIBERTY never had a chance, not that Company B was planning on giving them one anyway. With the superior fire control and night vision sights of the Abrams main battle tank, the Iraqis' ancient T-62s were sitting ducks. They could still be dangerous, especially to the Infantrymen in their Bradley fighting vehicles, but the Abrams

made quick work of them.

As soon as he sent his short contact report to LTC Charlton, CPT Waldron issued a platoon fire command to this lead platoon. With his tank adding its firepower to the four others in the platoon, in less than 30 seconds after the radio call, the massive 120 mm cannons on five tanks roared in unison.

The firing continued for two minutes as the gunners and tank commanders traversed left and right, seeking out and destroying other vehicles dug into supporting positions around the perimeter. In less time than it takes to tell, Company B had destroyed a half dozen T-62 tanks and several other armored vehicles, mostly BMP-1s, as well as some trucks that were moving behind the bunkers.

### **Fighting into the Night of March 20**

With Company B, 1-15 Infantry fighting its way towards the river in the north, and Company B, 1-64 Armor engaged against enemy armor and infantry in Objective LIBERTY, LTC Charlton ordered Company A, 1-15 Infantry to move closer to Objective FIREBIRDS but not to actually enter the compound. Fighting had never really died down in the Company A area, and this move brought more fire from Iraqi infantry with small arms, machine guns and light mortars. Additionally, some heavy anti-aircraft machine guns from the Iraqi Air Force defenders of the airbase also lashed out against Coalition forces.

At this point, TF 1-15 Infantry had every one of its companies engaged with the enemy. Company B was shooting to the northeast (towards An Nasayrah) and to the east at forces coming out of Objective LIBERTY. The tank company team was shooting to the east and southeast against enemy forces inside the 11th Division compound and on the perimeter. A Company, 1-15 Infantry was shooting both direct and indirect fire against the Iraqis in and around the airbase, Objective FIREBIRDS. The task force mortars were firing in support of Company A, and the scouts in their HMMWVs were hanging on the fringes of the fights, identifying targets deep inside both objectives and reporting them to the commander.

It was during this heavy fighting in the dark of night that one of the scouts identified what he was sure was a T-55 tank. He lased the tank and determined an accurate grid location using his LRASSS. The coordinates were quickly passed to the 1-10th Field Artillery, and that unit fired the first SADARM mission of the war.

Although TF 1-15 Infantry had found as much of a fight as it could handle, neither TF 2-69 Armor further west at the bridge over the Euphrates nor TF 1-30 in its blocking positions on the eastern sides of Objectives FIREBIRDS and LIBERTY had significant enemy contact during the evening. Even though his unit had become the de facto main effort of the 3rd BCT, LTC Charlton's task force had yet to suffer its first casualty.

The fighting around all three companies of TF 1-15 Infantry slowed occasionally during the evening, but it never stopped completely. The numbers of enemy prisoners of war were mounting, with most being held in the company team headquarters areas and guarded by the scouts or engineers. Later, when the sun came up, they would be consolidated for further evacuation.

At one point during the evening, the persistent Iraqi attacks out of Objective FIREBIRDS prompted COL Allyn to request



assistance from attack helicopters. A flight of AH-64s arrived in the area and orbited south of the airbase, well away from the heavy antiaircraft weapons that had been active earlier. By this time, LTC Charlton thought that they had been destroyed, but no one was taking chances. The aircraft departed without engaging any Iraqi targets. The fog of war had not yet been dissipated by American technology.

### Daybreak Comes on Morning of March 21

By early morning, things had quieted down significantly in all the TF 1-15 battle sectors. Infantrymen and tankers still scanned their sectors nervously, but the rattle of AK-47s and the nearly continuous whiz-bang of RPGs had died down. The quiet, however, did not last. As LTC Charlton put it, "At sun up, the mice began to come out of the woodwork."

The Iraqi attacks intensified as the sun rose higher in the sky. A significant amount of Iraqi Fedayeen in light armed pick-up trucks attacked out of the city of An Nasyriah towards the blocking positions manned by Company B, 1-15 Infantry. As had occurred the day before, these attackers were intermingled with small groups of Iraqis, mostly from the conventional army and air force, wishing to surrender.

The enemy prisoners of war began to add up even more than before. By daylight, TF 1-15 Infantry had more than 100 enemy prisoners of war (EPW). These were becoming a real burden to

the units manning the blocking positions. The task force commander stated that this situation taught him a lesson that he took with him into the later fights closer to Baghdad. He vowed to always have at least one empty truck under the control of the task force command sergeant major for the collection and movement of enemy prisoners of war.

### Smashing the Iraqi Main Effort

There was heavy fighting all day at all three company positions on March 21. By this time, the task force trains had closed into the area, and there was a significant effort made to shuttle platoons in and out of position during the short lulls so that they could refuel and resupply ammunition. The enemy Fedayeen attacking out of the city was the most determined, often making what amounted to suicide attacks against the Bradleys and tanks of the task force.

During the fighting this day, TF 1-15 Infantry sustained its first combat casualty. A scout, Sergeant Shaun Williams, was wounded, and his HMMWV damaged by an RPG. SGT Williams was the first Soldier from the 3rd BCT wounded in the war and might have been the first combat casualty of the entire 3rd Infantry Division.

Unable to move the vehicle to a more protected position, his fellow scouts were attempting to give him emergency treatment and extract him from the smashed vehicle while under close and



Sergeant Igor Paustovski

*Soldiers from the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) wait in their firing positions as enemy soldiers approach their position.*





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**Captain Scott Brannen provides cover as medics load a wounded Soldier onto a stretcher after an Iraqi counterattack in March.**

accurate enemy small arms fire. Without orders, two M113s from Company B, 317th Engineers moved into exposed position to block the enemy fire, allowing the extraction of the wounded man to go ahead unhindered.

As the fighting rose to a crescendo, COL Allyn called for Air Force close air support (CAS). Several A-10 Warthogs, working under the control of the TF 1-15 Infantry's Air Force Enlisted Tactical Air Controller (ETAC) arrived and started to attack the exposed Iraqi infantry that was pressing forward regardless of the casualties.

The A-10s formed a protective umbrella over the task force. They made multiple attacks, dropping two 500-pound bombs right on target but closer to the Soldiers than they had ever had them dropped before. The shockwaves rippled among the heavy armored vehicles and almost deafened the U.S. Soldiers. The Warthogs returned time after time, firing Maverick missiles and making low-level strafing runs with their powerful 30mm cannons.

According to LTC Charlton, "It was a classic ground/air operation. The company commander loved it, yelling into the radio as each plane made its pass. The Iraqi attack just dissolved."

After the A-10s struck, the Iraqi attacks began to slacken noticeably. More and more Iraqis came forward waving scraps of white clothing, offering to surrender. The task force captured several senior Iraqi officers, including one general in the Iraqi Air Force. This was the first general officer captured in the war.

### The Relief in Place

On the afternoon of the 21st, TF 1-15 Infantry handed over responsibility for Objective FIREBIRDS to TF 1-30 Infantry. Task Force 1-15 Infantry had fired on targets all over the objective, but had never actually moved onto the terrain and occupied it. That mission was left to TF 1-30. The next day, March 22, TF 1-30 assumed responsibility for the blocking positions that TF 1-15 Infantry had been manning for two days. TF 1-15 Infantry moved out of the area, under orders to move north and join the 2nd BCT and continue combat operations aimed at passing through the Karbala Gap.

Just before he left An Nasyriah, LTC Charlton was standing next to one of his platoon's positions near the Company A blocking position south of An Nasyriah, just west of Objective LIBERTY. He saw a large convoy making a turn to the north and heading past the blocking position towards the city.

LTC Charlton ordered his last platoon to stop the convoy and to tell the convoy commander to come see him at the company command post. Soon, the battalion commander of the 2nd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery (Patriot) came to the CP. LTC Charlton told him that he was headed right into the heart of the city from which hundreds of Iraqi attackers had been coming for almost two days straight. He advised the unit to take the route that passed south and west of the city.

The battalion commander was grateful for the warning. He turned his unit around and took the other, safer, route. In gratitude, he gave LTC Charlton one of his unit coins. LTC Charlton isn't positive, but he thinks that the mistaken turn the ADA unit took was the same one that a couple of days later led the ill-fated 507th Maintenance Company to An Nasyriah.

### Damage Inflicted on the Enemy

During the fighting at Objectives FIREBIRDS and LIBERTY, TF 1-15 Infantry destroyed six T-62 tanks, four BMP-1s, and 12 light trucks armed with machine guns. It also killed an estimated 200 Iraqi Soldiers and Fedayeen and captured almost 250, including one general officer and several colonels. The battalion suffered only a single casualty, and the Soldier was able to recover from his wounds and eventually rejoin the battalion back at Fort Benning.

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### Editor's Note

*This is an abridged version of the original article. The article contains many tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and other matters of value to our readers, but since Infantry is an unclassified, open-source publication that reaches 50 other nations and their armed forces, there are some matters best discussed only among ourselves. Army Knowledge Online (AKO) is the best forum in which to achieve that degree of security. The lessons learned during Operation Iraqi Freedom will help us win other wars, but only if we avoid compromising what we know now.*

*The author's article will appear in its entirety in the not-too-distant future on our AKO site, along with other articles and TTPs that Soldiers and leaders in the field are able to share with us. Operations Security (OPSEC) continues to demand our full attention, and I appreciate your support in this effort to sustain the force and make sure that the element of surprise continues to be ours, and ours alone.*

— RAE



# ARMORED VEHICLE DEFENSE AGAINST RPGs



COLONEL WILLIAM T. VOSSLER, U.S. Army, Retired

Following my 1998 retirement after 30 years of service in the U.S. Army, I have followed with interest continuing developments in Army weapons and tactics. The focus of my attention has been those developments which closely parallel my own experience as an infantry platoon leader, company and battalion commander, mechanized infantry battalion operations officer, armored brigade operations officer, and armored division force modernization chief.

Although I have not physically been in a Stryker vehicle, I have kept up to date with its development and fielding, and it seems that the M113, as we used it in the Vietnam War, provides a close analogy to the Stryker for purposes of combat engagement analysis. Both vehicles have the merits of armor protection, mobility to and within the battle area, conservation of strength and energy for the combat teams they carry, and heavy weapons platforms to augment the firepower of those combat teams. However, my experience also tells me that from the viewpoint of the enemy soldier running around the battlefield with a rocket propelled grenade (RPG), both vehicles present large, inviting targets at close range.

## COMBAT EXAMPLES

The following vignettes relate actual engagements my unit experienced in the Vietnam War with the M113 versus RPG attack. First, I must mention that the M113A1 armored personnel carrier (APC) we used was an early version of the more modernized M113A3 variant still in use today; the chief differences are that the M113 of the Vietnam era had less armor protection and a lower powered engine. The main armament was a .50 caliber machine gun mounted at the commander's cupola and, unlike the armored cavalry assault vehicles (ACAVs) of the Cavalry Squadrons, most of our vehicles did not have additional machine guns mounted on the top deck to be fired from gunners standing in the cargo hatch. However, due to the threat of RPG and mine attack, it was standard operating procedure to operate in a potential engagement area with the combat team riding on top of the vehicle or standing on the floor of the vehicle with the cargo hatch folded back.

I can think of three specific instances where we suffered casualties or vehicle loss due to RPG attack. All were close range attacks. In one instance, an RPG hit the right side of a 2nd Platoon vehicle just above the third road wheel. The projectile burned

through the ride side of the vehicle, continued across the inside of the compartment, narrowly missing the buttocks of the .50 cal. gunner standing in the commander's hatch, hit the interior of the left side, burned through that side and exited the vehicle without detonating fuel or ammunition. This attack resulted in two holes on either side of the vehicle, each about three inches in diameter and you could look straight through the vehicle from the side. The .50 cal. gunner did receive some minor shrapnel wounds to his buttocks and upper legs due to the spalling effect of the projectile burning its way into and out of the vehicle. To my knowledge, the RPG gunner was never seen.

A second incident occurred on the third day of the Cambodian invasion in May of 1970. Our company had been cross-attached with a tank battalion from the 25th Division and our platoons further cross-attached with tank companies. Upon our attack from Vietnam into Cambodia, we overran several training areas — not unlike one would find on the ranges and training areas at Fort Benning — with bleachers, chalk boards, map tables, latrines, the whole works. These facilities were ringed by defensive trenches and interconnected with tunnels. We encountered light resistance in these areas as the enemy (North Vietnamese Army [NVA] regulars) withdrew for consolidation and counterattack.

The commander of the tank company to which 3rd Platoon was attached was ordered by the Task Force commander to destroy the tunnels before proceeding. A combat engineer demolition team was requested to assist in this mission. A landing zone (LZ) was established, security posted and the demolition team was flown into the area with sufficient demolitions to accomplish the job: The 3rd Platoon leader brought his M113 into the LZ and loaded the three-man Combat Engineer team into his APC with the entire load of explosives, later estimated to be between 80 and 100 pounds of C-4.

I was about a kilometer from that LZ when I felt then heard the explosion. As the APC exited the LZ, it was hit by an RPG, which penetrated the vehicle and detonated the entire load of demolitions. The crater was shallow but wide. Pieces of the vehicle and crew were scattered everywhere. The largest pieces of the vehicle we found were the engine-transmission and the rear ramp door, which had been blown off its hinges. Everyone aboard was killed. All except the platoon leader were severely dismembered. The RPG gunner was also a casualty. When we got to the area, we found a now exposed spider hole and the headless torso of an NVA soldier



with an empty RPG launcher at his feet. I have always hoped he was the one who fired the RPG round which killed seven good Soldiers.

The third incident occurred about a month into the Cambodian mission. By this time, the company had been reunited and all platoons were under command and control of the company commander. We also received a change in mission and area and were now about eight miles inside Cambodia operating in the rubber plantations west of Memut. On June 1, we got into a major engagement with a company-size force of NVA. They attempted an ambush while we were moving, but vigilance and counter-ambush techniques prevailed. We discovered their intent and counter-ambushed. When the smoke cleared, we found 12 enemy dead, several hundred rounds of small arms ammunition and 25 RPGs. We sustained slight wounds to two Soldiers.

Three days later, they attacked again while we were on the move. A short but intense battle ensued as we received small arms, 60mm mortar and RPG fire. We managed to kill three before they broke off the engagement in the face of helicopter gun ships that had been called in for support. We suffered seven wounded in this fight including the artillery forward observer (FO) who was riding on "the gun carrier" when it was hit and destroyed by RPG fire.

The "gun carrier" had been a field expedient augmentation of our firepower. As we left our original base camp in Long An Province in mid-April and headed for our Cambodian border assembly area, some of my platoon members found a 106mm recoilless rifle in one of the base camp bunkers with ammunition for the gun. Our platoon strength was down to the point that we could field only three undermanned squads, so we had an extra M113 in the platoon. I gave permission to "borrow" the 106, and the platoon sergeant mounted it on top of the extra APC. There was plenty of room inside the carrier for the dozen antipersonnel (beehive) rounds and four or five antitank rounds we found with the gun. Prior to this engagement, we had fired the gun only once in combat, and it had proven its worth.

During the June 4 attack, the enemy apparently focused their fire on this carrier with its big gun (a wise tactical decision) as the gun carrier was hit very early in the engagement and could not be brought into action. I believe more than one RPG hit the carrier, but I was pretty busy and can't say for certain how many RPG hits it received. The bottom line is that it was hit severely with "Arty" and a couple of other guys wounded. We feared the 106mm ammunition inside the carrier would explode. Curiously, rather than explode, the propellant in the ammunition began to burn. The result was white-hot heat from a furious fire, which in the end actually melted the top deck, floor plates and the interior walls of the APC. The recoilless rifle eventually dropped through the top deck onto the steel cross members of the APC frame where it became firmly welded into place, the barrel now shaped like a banana. When the Cambodian campaign ended, we evacuated the remains of the gun carrier back into Vietnam and had to remove the 106 from the carrier with a cutting torch.

## ANALYSIS and LESSONS LEARNED

Short in effective range but lethal in effect, relatively inexpensive to produce, easy to transport and store, and relatively simple to employ, the RPG was, is, and will continue to be the weapon of choice for enemy foot soldiers against our armored vehicles. Daily press reports from Baghdad tell us that its utility

today remains as high today as it was more than 30 years ago. All combat crews of armored fighting vehicles today must be prepared to deal with RPG attacks.

Within the three combat examples provided there are several teaching points for the Stryker or Bradley crew in defending against RPG attack.

► **First**, always remember that you have an excellent combat vehicle. It will carry you into action and protect you against certain categories of enemy fire in support of your advance and/or defense. However, Strykers and Bradleys will only be as effective as the men who man them. You must be smart in their employment.

► **Second**, note that in the three combat examples I presented, the engagement ranges were short. In one instance, the RPG attack was completely undetected until the vehicle was hit, and the RPG gunner was neither seen nor engaged. In the second instance, close-in security failed to disclose the enemy lying in wait well within the danger area afforded to him by his weapons system. Constant vigilance, understanding of the terrain in the battle area and understanding your enemy and his tactics are key here. In defending against RPG attack, a goal should be to create an active or passive stand-off area around your vehicle at all times beyond which the enemy cannot do you harm with RPG attack.

Once attacked, well-rehearsed action drills enhance your survivability and success while reducing casualties. The third example also points out the merits of moving with air cover whenever possible. The nature of the terrain and intelligence indicators of enemy activity will dictate the advisability of air cover. It will not always be there, but should always be planned for.

As you enter danger areas in which you lose the stand-off distance against RPG attack, do not stay bound to your vehicle. Dismount from the vehicle when terrain and intelligence indicators suggest that it is wise or even necessary to do so. In this type of scenario, active and aggressive dismounted action must also serve to protect the vehicle as it remains in over-watch of the dismounted section. One of the problems I experienced in command of a Bradley equipped battalion in Europe was the tendency of squads and platoons to become too closely tied to the vehicle and not react to the tactical situation with dismounted ground maneuver when it was appropriate to do so.

► **Lastly**, remember what your vehicle is and what it is not. You know best what it is, you have trained on it. I can tell you one of the things it is not: it is not a tank! Again, back to my Bradley battalion days, the vehicle became so formidable in mind and in action that there was a tendency to forget that it is an infantry combat vehicle and not a tank. Any attempt to bull your way through an avenue of approach or into an objective area in tank fashion will result in failure and possible loss of the vehicle and its personnel. This caution also extends up the chain from the squad level to the command level where courses of action are considered and orders are given. Employ the vehicle to its best advantage, always keeping in mind what it is and what it is not capable of doing.

Best of luck to the Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

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Retired Colonel William T. (Tom) Vossler served as a platoon leader with Company B, 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 47th Infantry Regiment in 1969-1970 in Vietnam.

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# IEDs: Enemy Steps Up Attacks Using Explosive Devices

SECOND LIEUTENANT JAMES A. CAPOBIANCO

**Improvised Explosive Device (IED):** A device placed or fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating destructive, lethal, noxious, pyrotechnic, or incendiary chemicals and designed to destroy, incapacitate, harass, or distract. It may incorporate military stores, but is normally devised from nonmilitary components. (DoD/NATO)

**Ambush:** is a form of attack by fire or other destructive means from concealed positions on a moving or temporarily halted enemy. (FM 3-0)

As our forces restore stability in Iraq, they are routinely confronted with enemy ambushes and hostile fires. The more deadly of which have involved the use of enemy IEDs. These IEDs have progressed in their complexity of design as well as emplacement. With attacks on coalition forces continuing and in pre-planned organization, so too must our awareness of enemy tactics and techniques.

Since the cessation of major combat operations, enemy attacks have consisted primarily of guerilla style ambushes involving IEDs. The growing frequency and devastation wrought by these devices is a direct result of the increasing level of sophistication in IED design and employment. Specifically, Iraqi terrorists have evolved from the simplicity of suicide attacks to the complexity of remote control vehicle-borne IEDs.

The types of IEDs possessed by these terrorists are limited only by the imagination and the resources available. U.S. forces have encountered IEDs in the form of boxes, bags, debris, animal carcasses, unexploded ordnance, soda cans and broken down vehicles. These explosives are employed as single devices and constructed into complex daisy chains. Presently, the fuses generally consist of time delay, command detonated and pressure sensitive devices.



Sergeant First Class William Armstrong

*This HMMWV was destroyed after driving over an improvised explosive device in Mosul, Iraq. Fortunately, the Soldiers riding in the vehicle were able to escape with minor scratches and cuts.*

- An IED found July 29, 2003, on "Line Road" west of Taji had three artillery shells with a time-delay detonation device; this was the first confirmation of a time-delay detonated IED. Time delayed devices afford the enemy the advantage of unmanned attacks, but require the enemy to accurately predict the time and route a convoy will traverse.

- Randomly timed convoys with varied routes will help counter the effectiveness of time delayed IEDs.

The emplacement of IEDs can take anywhere from several minutes in the case of soda cans to several hours for daisy chained artillery rounds. The casualty radius currently ranges from 50 to 300 meters. In addition to the loss of life, the devastation caused by IEDs includes roadbed and bridge destruction, area denial, and disruption of convoy movement.

Iraqi terrorists routinely use IEDs in

ambushes; however, the method with which they do so varies. The detonation of an IED is sometimes used to prepare a convoy for ambush. The IED disables a vehicle or temporarily halts a convoy; hostile forces then engage with both small arms and RPGs. In other instances, the enemy will harass a convoy with small arms fire, enticing the unit to dismount and return fire. Once the unit dismounts, they find themselves in the kill zone of a pre-aimed IED.

IEDs are in their nature diverse. There is no single type nor is there a single method of emplacement. Yet, general patterns have emerged that can assist the combat Soldier in accomplishing his mission.

## Time of Day

Soldiers must maintain situational awareness at all times; as such, they must be aware of times during which the enemy



is most active and most likely to attack. Currently, most attacks occur during the hours of early morning and late evening. Between 2100 and 0300 hours is potentially the most dangerous time to be on the road. Daylight attacks have been on the rise, but it is under the cover of darkness that the enemy feels most confident. Many units are not returning fire, reinforcing the enemy belief that they can strike at coalition forces and safely escape.

- Avoid main supply routes (MSRs) during times of darkness and remain alert no matter the time of day; always return fire whether the enemy's precise location is known or not.

### Cover and Concealment

Typically, the enemy chooses to stage attacks from areas which have access roads, buildings, overpasses or thick brush along MSRs and auxiliary supply routes (ASR). The enemy tends to use the cover and concealment provided by buildings, overpasses and brush when attacking, then uses nearby access roads for a hasty escape. In fact, the most commonly employed method of attack has been ambushes conducted from overpasses using small arms, RPGs and IEDs. Overpasses provide good observation, clear fields of fire, decent cover and concealment and swift escape routes.

- When passing an overpass, use a "road guard" concept (similar to that used during march and PT run formations). The front security element accelerates and passes under the overpass to assume an over watch position. His gun is fixed on the overpass as the remainder of the convoy passes under. The rear element then speeds up and relieves the front security element until the convoy is out of small arms range; he then resumes his original position at the rear of the convoy.

- Do not stop under overpasses, and remain cautious when passing near or under one. Maintain observation on the overpass at all times; personnel on the overpass may either be acting as a scout or be planning to throw or drop an IED at you or your convoy. Switch lanes as you pass under to prevent potential attackers from establishing an effective aim point.

### Deception

The use of deception has led to several effective attacks on U.S. forces. Enemy forces have sought to lure Coalition forces into ambush sites by feigning injury or requesting assistance. An enemy combatant posing as a taxi driver claimed to have engine trouble. As four Soldiers approached to assist, he detonated his vehicle killing the Soldiers and himself. In other instances, "trusted" local officials deceptively led U.S. patrols to potential enemy targets. Upon arriving at the objective, the patrol was ambushed. Deception was also used in the killing of three Rangers as an SUV approached their checkpoint and suddenly exploded.

- Be aware of deceptive tactics. Never let your guard down. As harsh as it may seem, it is recommended that convoys do not stop to offer assistance to apparently wounded or injured Iraqis.

### Preferred Targets

Iraqi terrorists have also demonstrated a predilection for assaulting small (2-4 vehicles), lightly armed convoys, as well as weak rear elements of larger convoys. Typically, the enemy will engage these elements with small arms and RPG fire. Hostile forces are purposefully focusing on small convoys and rear elements to ensure a minimal counterattack.

- As most ambushes are focused on the rear element of convoys, ensure that the rear element is equipped with a crew served weapon and has been briefed on potential enemy attack.

- If possible, establish a "trail" security element that shadows your convoy by several hundred meters. This element can react as a quick reaction force in the event of attack.

- Emphasize the physical security of your convoy. The greater the visible security, the less likely you are to be attacked. The enemy likes to hit "soft" targets; do not present them with one.



Sergeant Jacob H. Smith

*A Soldier with the 2d Cavalry Regiment readies his weapon as the boat he is riding in passes under a bridge on the Tigris River in Baghdad, Iraq. IEDs using grenades, rocks, and other dangerous items have been thrown off bridges by hostile forces during the patrols.*

### Disruption

Iraqi guerillas are attempting to disrupt, slow, or isolate elements of a convoy. They attempt to slow or stop the convoy just prior to the execution of an ambush. Incidents whereby civilians try to ram convoy vehicles are on the rise. This is especially prevalent in Southern Iraq.

- All convoy elements must be aware of and on the alert for suspicious vehicles driving near or around the convoy. These vehicles may be sizing the convoy up and preparing for attack.

- The CURRENT Rules of Engagement allow you to take the appropriate actions to remove the threat. Consider firing warning shots, or shoot to disable the vehicle if the threat persists.

### Motorcycles

An emerging tactic is the use of motorcycles in hit and run style attacks. Motorcycles give the enemy the advantage of speed and increased maneuverability. Generally, these attacks are conducted by motorcyclists carrying a passenger. The passenger acts as the shooter and has used weapons such as grenades, RPGs and small arms.

- Be aware of motorcycles with a passenger; pay particular attention to the passenger's actions.





U.S. Army photo

*Leftover munitions such as these can be fashioned into IEDs. The types of IEDs possessed by the enemy are limited only by the imagination and resources available. Some IEDs U.S. forces have encountered came in the form of boxes, bags, debris, animal carcasses, soda cans, broken down vehicles and unexploded ordnance.*

## Signals

Another potential indicator of a pending ambush is the presence of signal devices. Frequently, hostile forces will emplace observation posts (OP) to establish an "eyes on" presence. These OPs usually consist of a single individual, although incidents have occurred where small groups of individuals, including children and adolescents, have been used as recon assets. Hostile forces use rooftops as platforms from which they observe approaching convoys and signal the assault element. Signaling measures have included flare guns, cell phones, hand gestures, and other communicative means. Most recently, the enemy has been caught using improvised periscopes to observe coalition forces from concealed locations.

- Be aware of people who may be observing you and your activities. Of particular concern are those who seem to be counting your vehicles and personnel. Make special note of anyone who may be videotaping or photographing your unit. It is quite possible that these individuals may be gathering information to be used in an imminent or future attack.

## Further Recommendations

- Avoid routes through heavily

populated areas and areas with numerous buildings. If a convoy must negotiate such an area, move as quickly and securely as the situation permits.

- Maintain a steady speed of no less than 35 mph. Resist stopping at all costs.

- Do not stop for nor attempt to move objects found in/on or near the road. Leave as much clearance as possible when passing such objects.

- Roll up windows in pedestrian congested areas; be aware of any personnel who attempt to approach your vehicles.

- Lead convoy vehicles must be equipped with binoculars so that they can observe for potential threats.

- All convoys should be equipped with tow straps or tow bars to quickly recover disabled vehicles.

- All vehicles must be reinforced with sandbags to help absorb the effects of IEDs and other attacks.

- Convoys should be aware of changes in civilian activity. This includes traffic patterns, the presence or absence of children, or unusually quiet areas. Local inhabitants may have been warned of a pending attack and may have taken precautions such as safeguarding their children, turning off their lights, and staying off the streets.

- U.S. military vehicles are the only ones using headlights during daylight; restrict their use. The use of daytime headlights allows the enemy to identify your convoy from a greater distance and allows him greater time with which to finalize his attack.

- Do not assume children and adolescents are innocent. They may be acting as a recon element or may be preparing to launch an attack themselves.

- Maintain proper intervals between vehicles; this will minimize the damage caused by IEDs.

- Maintain situational awareness, be prepared, maintain good communications, **KEEP MOVING!**

Since May 1, 2003, more than 61 coalition Soldiers have been killed by IEDs; the total number of injured and wounded is even higher. IEDs are difficult

to identify and at times are nearly impossible to avoid. The outlined recommendations are a beginning. The enemy continues to develop new tactics and continues to employ IEDs in innovative ways. Our awareness and understanding must progress in step with that of our adversary. The successful employment of IEDs can and will be minimized through the advanced understanding of our enemy and by our adaptation to their strategy and attacks. The best safeguard against the enemy threat is to keep constant vigilance and to never be lulled into a false sense of security.

*"One who knows the enemy and knows himself will not be endangered in a hundred engagements."*

— Sun Tzu

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# TRAINING NOTES



## SMALL ARMS INTEGRATION: *BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER*

COLONEL MICHAEL SMITH

As the Army continues its drive to transformation, the number and variety of weapon-mounted sights and accessories arriving in units is growing. Intended to improve the individual Soldier's lethality and survivability, the growing number of systems reaching the field has had one unfortunate side effect — confusion.

As portrayed in Figure 1, the number of items a Soldier can mount on his individual weapon presents him with a dizzying array of choices. Deciding where and how to mount a particular device is complicated by conflicting real-estate claims and integration issues associated with operating envelopes of other devices. Additionally, new mounting surfaces were added to weapons, multiplying the configuration options and the associated challenge of successfully employing the devices.

Heeding feedback received from a variety of units, the U.S. Army Infantry Center initiated an effort to develop a document that would

answer the many questions posed by Soldiers. Working with the Project Manager (PM) Soldier Weapons and the Project Manager Soldier Equipment, an outline of the information contained in the Small Arms Integration Book (SAIB) was developed. The SAIB provides:

- Real-estate claims for sights and accessories for both individual and crew served weapons;
- Installation and mounting instructions for sights and accessories;
- Zero target offsets for each sight or accessory;
- Descriptions and abbreviated operating instructions for each accessory covered in the book; and
- Platoon-level equipment tables matching weapons and accessories to an individual Soldier's position with the rifle platoon.

An intense and sustained team effort was required to create the Small Arms Integration Book. Government agencies and contractors worked together to design and produce a comprehensive, easy-to-use reference book that would meet the information needs of Soldiers in the field. Key players included

the U.S. Army Infantry Center (USAIC), the PM Soldier Weapons, PM Soldier Sensors and Equipment, U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command-Armament Research Development and Engineering Center (TACOM-ARDEC), TACOM-Rock Island, U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM), and various units throughout the world. The 29th Infantry Regiment and 75th Ranger Regiment provided valuable input vital to determining the data contained in the Small Arms Integration Book and in finalizing the design of the book.

The SAIB is not a technical manual (TM) nor is it intended to replace TMs. It is more accurately described as a leader's guide used to prepare weapons for deployment and employment. The book incorporates information from the most up-to-date sources available, much of which is contained within existing TMs.

Unlike technical manuals, there is a mix of artwork and photographs in the Small Arms Integration Book to illustrate mounting instructions and, as it matures, more line art will be incorporated to ensure Soldiers have the clearest and simplest mounting instruction diagrams possible.

Figure 1





The SAIB is organized into separate weapon chapters including the M16A2, M4/M4A1 Carbine, M16A4, M24, M249, M60, M240B, M2 and MK19. Each weapon chapter is divided into sections with mounting instructions and offset targets for that weapon's accessories and devices.

Device mounting instructions and offset targets are at the heart of the Small Arms Integration Book. The first two versions of the book attempted to provide a "schoolbook" solution for each weapon and device. Feedback from the field consistently indicates a preference for publishing all possible mounting configurations. As a result, the most recently published update of the SAIB (March 2002) includes many more weapon and device configurations. Some of the data contained in the SAIB include mounting instructions, 25-meter zero target offsets, and 10-meter boresight target offsets (Figure 3).

In addition, safety warnings and other important information was added from technical manuals and a number of annexes were also provided offering information on device diagrams with abbreviated operating instructions; Infantry Platoon Equipping Diagrams (Figure 2); a battery cross reference table, bore light zeroing procedures; and a consolidated target offset summary table. These are just a few examples of the information included to ensure the Small Arms Integration Book is an even more useful reference.

The SAIB was published on three previous occasions. The first two distributions were limited to developers and select units, in order to obtain feedback to assist in the final design of the book. The third edition of the SAIB (August 2000) included the shipment of more than 300 CD-ROMs to all Special Forces, Ranger and Infantry Battalions. It was also placed on the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's (TRADOC's) General Dennis J. Reimer Training and Doctrine Digital Library.

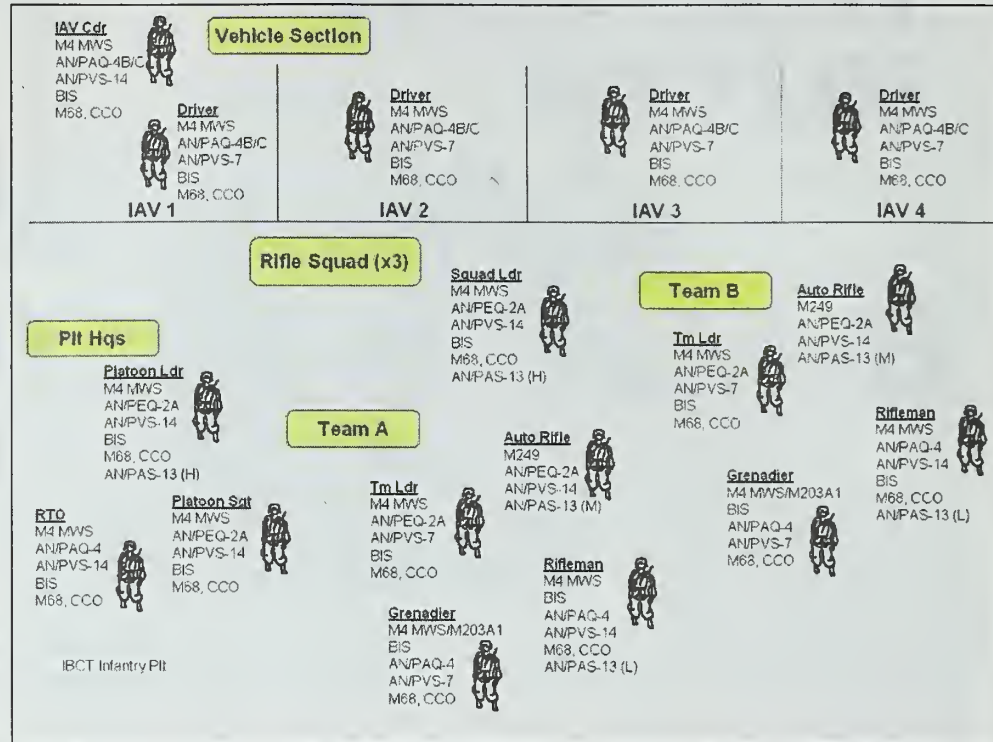
As a result of the positive feedback received by the USAIC, the latest edition of the book was updated and published in March 2002. In addition to incorporating comments and corrections received from units about the last version of the book, many supplemental device mounting configurations with accompanying target offsets were included.

The SAIB is accessible via the Internet at [www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/st/saib/saib.htm](http://www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/st/saib/saib.htm).

Units reported significantly improved weapons qualification results when using the information contained in the Small Arms Integration. Release of this most recent update of the SAIB is expected to build on the success of previous releases, easing the Soldier's burden while enhancing his lethality and survivability.

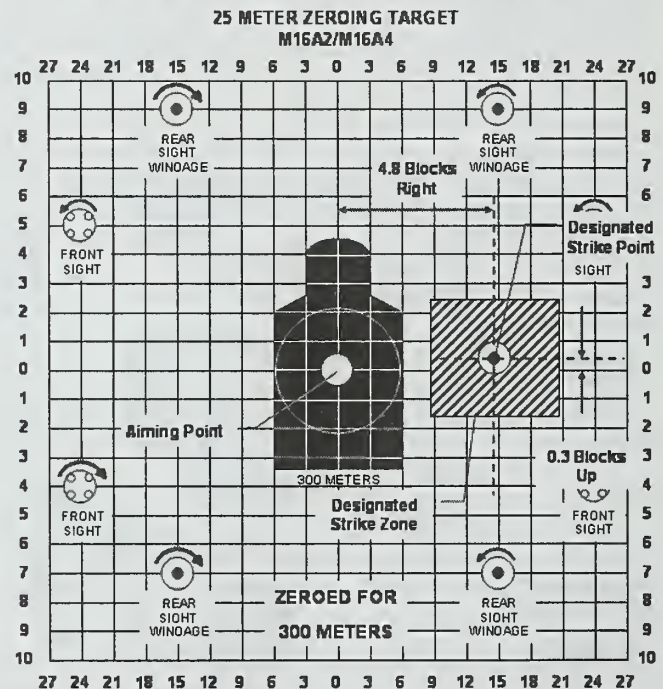
**Colonel Michael Smith** is currently serving as Project Manager Soldier Weapons at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

**Figure 2 - IBCT Infantry Platoon**



**Figure 3**

## M4 MWS with ANPEQ-2A Mounted Using Mounting Bracket/Picatinny Rail Grabber on Left Side Rail



ZERO TARGET DATA FOR M16A2/M16A4 RIFLE

- FOR ZEROING AT 25 METERS, ROTATE THE REAR SIGHT ELEVATION KNOB TO THE 300 METER SETTING. THEN CLOCKWISE (UP) ONE CLICK PAST THE 300 METER SETTING FOR M16A2 RIFLE. CLOCKWISE (UP) TWO CLICKS PAST THE 300 METER SETTING FOR THE M16A4 RIFLE.
- AIM AT TARGET CENTER. ADJUST SIGHTS TO MOVE SHOT GROUP CENTER AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE WHITE DOT IN THE CENTER OF TARGET.
- AFTER COMPLETING THE 25 METER ZERO, ROTATE THE REAR SIGHT ELEVATION KNOB COUNTER-CLOCKWISE (DOWN) ONE CLICK TO THE 300 METER SETTING FOR THE M16A2 RIFLE, DOWN TWO CLICKS TO THE 300 METER SETTING FOR THE M16A4 RIFLE. THE WEAPON WILL BE ZEROED FOR 300 METERS.



# TACTICAL DECISION EXERCISE:

## Bomb Attacks in Afghanistan

**Editor's Note:** The following vignettes were adapted from *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War*, which was written by Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester Grau. The four vignettes were submitted by Haji Mohammad Yakub, an urban guerrilla in Kabul during the war, who describes how he and Mujahideen members planned and carried out bomb attacks on Soviet and Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) targets in the 1980s.

Examine the vignettes below and then read the discussion that follows.

Bombing is a necessary part of being an urban guerrilla. The object is to create fear and take out selected individuals. We got our explosives from Pakistan. Commander Azizuddin and Commander Meskinyar were our contacts in Paghman District who forwarded the explosives and detonators to us. They used elderly people as our go betweens to carry messages and explosives to us.

**1** In April 1980, we carried out an attack on the Radio Afghanistan building. This housed the central offices for Afghanistan radio and television broadcasting. Soviet advisers worked at the building where they oversaw radio and television broadcasting and edited and cleared the news before broadcast. The Soviets were our targets. We received a bomb from our contacts and gave it to a woman who worked in the radio station. She smuggled it into the station and armed it. The bomb went off at 1000 hours on a work day. The explosion killed two Afghan Party activists and two Soviets. It also wounded a DRA soldier. For some time after the blast, Afghanistan Radio and TV stopped broadcasting. After this, the security procedures for the building were greatly increased and everyone was carefully searched. Our lady contact later managed to get herself transferred to the payroll office of Kabul University.

**2** The communist regime converted Kabul University into a center for communist indoctrination. We decided to target the primary Party Organization at Kabul University in January 1981. Bombing seemed to be our best option. By this time, our lady contact at Radio Afghanistan was working in the payroll office at Kabul

University. We gave her two bombs. She planted one in the University Administration building and set the timer for 1100. She set the second in the primary Party Organization building and set that timer for 1145. The theory was that, after the first bomb went off, people would mill around the site and then the key party activists would gather in the primary Party Organization building to discuss the bombing. The second bomb would attack this concentration. Our plan worked as we thought it would. Following the blast in the administration building, the party secretaries of all the various communist organizations gathered in the primary Party Organization building. The blast killed a Soviet adviser and several party secretaries. The bombs killed a total of 10 and wounded an unknown number.

**3** On May 6, 1983, we bombed the Ministry of Interior building in Kabul. We had planted 27 kilograms of explosive in a room on the second floor of the building close to the office of the Minister. The bombs were hidden in four large flower pots that had been there for some time. We had a contact who was a gardener for the Ministry of the Interior. He agreed to smuggle in the explosives, plant the bombs and set them for detonation. We trained him how to do the job. He mixed the explosives with limestone and smuggled them in plastic bags over a period of time. We planned to detonate the bombs during the daytime for maximum casualties. However our HIH (Islamic Party) headquarters in Peshawar overruled us and told us to set the bombs off at night. HIH wanted to keep the Minister of the Interior Gulab Zoy alive, since he was a leading member of the Khalq faction and his survival would insure that the friction between the Khalq and Parchim communist party factions continued.

The gardener set all the time pencils for 2300 hours when he went home at 1600 hours. There was no sense setting different times since the building would virtually be deserted. The time bombs went off on time and killed four duty officers and damaged the minister's office. If we had set off the bombs during the day, we would have killed Gulab Zoy, Ghazi (his body guard), Sheruddin (his aide-de-camp) and perhaps a hundred others. The DRA closed roads around the building for two hours and conducted an investigation. However, they thought that the blast was







*In one of the vignettes, urban guerrillas hid a bomb in the bottom of a food cart in Kabul. Improvised explosive devices have become a frequent threat to our forces deployed overseas.*

connected to some internal quarrel within the communist leadership and never suspected our gardener.

④ The Soviets lived in the eastern Micro rayon region of Kabul. We decided to attack the Soviets right where they were living. There was a bus stop in the area where the Soviets would wait for their buses to work. We checked the timing of the buses. There was a daily 0745 morning bus that drew the most Soviets. We needed to establish a pattern so that we could leave a bomb without drawing attention. We got a push cart and loaded it with the best fruits and vegetables that we could get. The produce came from Parwan Province. We charged reasonable prices. The Soviets and local people got used to seeing us there and buying from us. We kept this up for several days. At night, we would work on the push cart. We put a false bottom in the cart so that we could put our bombs in the bottom of the cart and they would be undetected even if the cart were inspected. We attacked on the 2nd of October 1983. We loaded five bombs into the bottom of the cart. We inserted time pencil fuses in the bombs and set them for 0743. Then we put in the false bottom and loaded the cart with produce. Six Mujahideen carried out the attack. None of us carried weapons. We brought the cart to the bus stop as usual. Thirteen

Soviets crowded around it to see what was on sale. We slipped away from the cart and mixed with the local people. The bombs went off at 0743 just before the bus arrived. The blast killed 13, wounded 12 and damaged a nearby store. The DRA searched the crowd but made no arrests from our group.

## DISCUSSION

The following observations are not intended to second-guess the actions of those who had to deal with the urban guerrillas in Afghanistan; they dealt with an adversary whose tactics and techniques they had seldom if ever seen before, and whose implacable hatred of them impelled him to strike whenever and wherever he could. However, a careful reading of the details of these four attacks reveals a number of factors which — if taken into account — could have either reduced their effectiveness, or perhaps even prevented them altogether. This series of actions so effectively outlined by Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau describes the innovation and boldness of the Afghan insurgents, some of whose techniques are being employed today by our own adversaries. It is up to us to examine these accounts, derive our own lessons from them, and use them to our advantage.

Over the past decade, we have learned a

thing or two about how insurgents fight, their tactics and methods, and their weapons and explosive devices. This experience has come from the Israelis, from other allies in the Middle East and Europe, from the Soviet experience in Afghanistan and in Chechnya, from our own and our allies' experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, and from other sources in close contact with our adversaries. Improvised explosive devices (IED) have become a frequent threat to our forces deployed overseas, and as we further close in on the enemy he will become increasingly desperate, eventually resorting to further measures such as IED and even the homicide bombers with which Israel has had to contend for so long.

Upon reading these accounts, one gains the impression that the Soviets and their DRA allies were overconfident, believing that their preponderance in men and materiel and their highly visible presence would overwhelm the guerrillas, driving them underground and eliminating the threat. Such was not the case; they soon learned to move among and around the Soviets and DRA by blending into the background and becoming part of the pattern of life. In this manner, guerrillas and their sympathizers soon became insiders within the very infrastructure they sought to attack. The gardener in the Ministry of the Interior was a good example of this. In a foreign country, host nation personnel eventually may begin to all look the same to those charged with manning checkpoints, and — given fewer or no bomb attacks and the concomitant perception of a lower threat level — the clearance and screening procedures in effect may eventually become little more than *pro forma* actions, more symbolic than effective. That is when we are most vulnerable.

Screening procedures for all local national employees must be both detailed and rigidly enforced, with the movement of employees within the infrastructure being closely monitored. Such procedures should include background checks, polygraph examinations, daily sweeps with metal detectors, and spot checks of their persons and work areas. The secretary who worked first for Radio Afghanistan and later at Kabul University illustrates the damage such a mole can inflict. Low-level



employees such as she are often well below the horizon because of the perceived menial nature of their jobs, and because they are often allowed to come and go at will. These often ingratiate themselves with superiors and security personnel, over time earning a measure of immunity. To these dedicated revolutionaries, working for months or years in the same job for a pittance is worthwhile, for it eventually affords the opportunity to plant or detonate that one bomb — or fire one or more shots — at the right time. In Vietnam we learned that the enemy is capable of incredible patience, and today's adversaries are no exception.

Man's best friend is a staunch ally in the search for explosives, and there is little information to indicate that the Soviets ever used dogs as widely as we do. The gardener at the ministry of Interior and his deadly cargo would have never gotten to first base if he had been stopped at a checkpoint where bomb dogs were in use. We need to expand the use of these superb animals, and employ small walking patrols supported by riflemen in overwatch positions to detect potential bombers as they approach their targets. The bomber will become increasingly nervous and wary as he gets closer to his destination, but he may be taken unawares several blocks away. Dog handlers and the riflemen they have as security will need training on the special rules of engagement their mission requires.

Another of the lessons learned at high cost in Vietnam — and reinforced by the Soviet experience in Afghanistan — is the danger in setting a predictable pattern. Vary your routes and times of movement. The most effective ambush is one set at the precise time and place where you know your adversary will be. United States Army units in Vietnam executed some spectacularly successful ambushes exactly because our enemy became complacent and let his movements become predictable. Soviet soldiers got used to regularly using the buses, and the urban guerrillas soon picked up on the pattern and employed a fruit vendor's cart — another common sight in the Third World — to attack them. In this case, we see another significant factor: the cultural difference between American and guerrilla perceptions of collateral damage. We view the loss of innocent bystanders as something to be avoided whenever possible; to the terrorist — be he Hamas, Hezbollah, Saddam Fedayeen, Taliban, al Qaeda, or any other group, the death of a number of civilians means little or nothing.

Maintain your situational awareness at all times. Crowds of local nationals will show up at the worst possible time, and when a crowd suddenly forms or disperses ask yourself why. Whenever possible, avoid masses of locals and always be alert to the possibility of trouble. With that in mind, make a mental note of what you would do if you came under fire, because when an ambush is sprung, seconds count. U.S. Army units have well-planned and rehearsed battle drills for such contingencies, and the recent spate of bomb attacks are a reaction to those fast, effective countermeasures. The remnants of Saddam's paramilitary bands cannot withstand the fire and maneuver of American infantry, and now they are resorting to other means. But it is our infantry that will ultimately defeat them in detail, and they know it.

Finally, when a bomb goes off, it is imperative that those in the area not run to the site to gape at the damage, as happened in the Kabul University bombing in 1981. Everyone from the Viet Cong

to the Irish Republican Army has employed the second — delayed or command detonated — bomb technique to stack up casualties, and we needn't lose Soldiers for the sake of curiosity. Let the experts — host nation and medical personnel and explosive ordnance teams — get in and do their jobs while we provide security as needed.

The U.S. Army personnel currently serving America and her people in the remotest corners of the globe are some of the finest Soldiers ever sent forth in defense of this great nation, and they deserve our total, unstinting commitment to their support. For this reason, I encourage you to continue to write to *Infantry Magazine* and pass along your experiences and ideas so that we can share them with American and allied units engaged in the War on Terrorism. Our address is inside the cover of this issue, and my e-mail is [enor@benning.army.mil](mailto:enor@benning.army.mil).

— Russell A. Eno  
*Infantry Editor*

## How to submit articles to *Infantry Magazine*

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Topics for manuscripts include information on organization, weapons, equipment, tactics, and techniques and to provide a forum for progressive ideas. We also include relevant historical articles, with the emphasis on the lessons we can learn from the past. The best advice we can give you is to write and tell us about your article idea, explaining your intended theme, scope, and organization. We'll let you know whether we would be interested in seeing the proposed article, and we will give you any further guidance you may need.

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# On Battalion Command



## *Advice for Future Commanders*

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD D. HOOKER, JR.

**N**ot long ago, I gave up command of an infantry battalion. I wasn't the best commander in the division, but I think I was a good one. Along the way, I learned some lessons that may be useful to you, the officer who aspires to command an infantry battalion in the U.S. Army.

There are officers out there who say they aren't interested in pursuing battalion command in today's Army. Don't buy it! If you are a leader, command is as good as it gets — the most rewarding and professionally satisfying experience you will ever have. But it will take the very best you've got to give.

### **Taking the colors**

If you are lucky, the outgoing commander has made an effort to set you up for success by feeding you information and putting you in the picture well before you arrive. He should be courteous and helpful and strive to make your reception and integration as painless as possible. Hopefully, he will involve you in decisions that will affect the battalion after he is gone, and resist the temptation to make "midnight" personnel moves that you will have to live with.

If you are unlucky, your predecessor will do few or none of these things. Command is an intensely personal experience and some officers may take it personally when you arrive to replace them. They will give up the colors reluctantly and perhaps not too gracefully. That's human nature, and I wouldn't get worked up about it. Your command doesn't begin until the moment you take the colors, and everything that happens before then you can't control. So have some compassion for the "old" guy, and focus on things you can influence. That's when the fun begins.

You'll have little to do with the ceremony itself, other than show up on time and in the right uniform! Remember that this is the outgoing commander's day, and give him every courtesy. Your remarks should be brief and modest. Resist the temptation to get your new battalion into the theater for a big talk the same day. A change of command is an emotional event for all concerned. It's far better to let your troops have the rest of the day off, and meet informally with your command sergeant major (CSM) and executive officer (XO). Focus on the next day and the next week, and forego the command philosophy discussion until later. This is your first opportunity to break the ice, and you should focus on establishing personal relationships with these two key men. Afterwards, have the CSM walk you around the entire battalion

area. Then drop in to see your brother commanders in their headquarters. Once that's done, go home and get some rest. You're going to need it!

### **What Matters, What Doesn't**

Your job as a battalion commander is to make decisions and give guidance.

You are not getting paid to draft orders, prepare briefings, poke around in trash cans or torture your subordinates about trivial things. In short, to be successful you must avoid the temptation to micromanage.

Micromanagement is the biggest problem facing the officer corps today, and it springs from an inner insecurity that demands total control. Some commanders, less confident than others, prefer to call it "attention to detail." There's a big difference.

This style of leadership is poorly suited for the battlefield for a very simple reason: once the shooting starts, you can't control the small details anyway, you can't be everywhere, and your job is to focus on those few key battlefield decisions — mostly when and where to employ your key combat multipliers like FASCAM (Family of Scatterable Mines), Volcano mines, attack helicopters or your task force reserve — to give your subordinates the best chance to win and survive. If you're doing anything else, you're not doing your job. And if you're going to lead like that in combat, you have to do it in garrison and in training.

Building a sound command environment that avoids micromanagement means empowering your subordinates and underwriting their mistakes. That takes moral courage. But what you gain is priceless. Your company commanders will learn to be decisive by making decisions, confident that you will back them up. They will make occasional mistakes, but they will learn from them and grow into their jobs with amazing speed. And they will enjoy being commanders, something all-too-often missing in our Army today.

There are, however, some mistakes you cannot condone. The death or serious injury of a Soldier due to negligence or carelessness cannot be overlooked and can always be avoided. Poorly planned and executed training is not an honest mistake — it will surely cost lives if you allow it to happen. Loss of a sensitive item is a very serious affair and is always preventable. Dishonesty and lack of integrity are and should be unforgivable. It's a good idea, early in your command, to go one-on-one with your company



commanders and spell out clearly where they have freedom to fail, and where they don't.

Many battalion commanders make one fatal mistake without realizing it. They focus on something they do well and measure their subordinates against it. It may be a 12-minute two mile. It may be a 16-hour-a-day work ethic. It may be an obsession with beautiful "slide-ology." Whatever it is, it's usually not an accepted Army or unit standard. Every subordinate has a right to know what the standard is and to be measured against it. Your standards ought to be high, but they should be objective and rooted in Army standards and values — not your personal prejudices. Your every action should be designed to build the team, not breed resentment. Think about it.

Once you've established a command climate that fosters trust and openness, your next task is to focus your battalion on your priorities. They should be few and easy to remember. Publish them in a brief command philosophy statement (the shorter the better), talk about them often and reiterate them each time you put out quarterly training guidance. When you meet your officers and NCOs in the battalion area, ask them what their priorities are. If they're not sure, or have different ones from yours, work harder to simplify your message and get it out more efficiently. Your battalion can't succeed if it doesn't know what you want.

With few exceptions, infantry battalions are constrained by all sorts of things: limited training time, personnel turnover, lean budgets, scarce ammunition and busy deployment schedules. (This environment makes it imperative that you focus on a limited number of task areas that as a unit you do exceedingly well.)

Here is one commander's "Top 4:"

- PT
- Small Unit Battle Drills
- Marksmanship
- Maintenance

Remember that this is broad guidance that applies to your battalion as a whole. Obviously your battle staff or maintenance platoon, for example, will have specific training tasks, but your basic priorities apply across the unit and especially to your maneuver units. Stay away from verbiage like "we will be a physically fit, combat ready unit ready to deploy at all times." Instead, spell out exactly what you want: "the standard for companies and separate platoons is a 275 APFT average" or "subordinate units will maintain all assigned equipment to 10/20 standards with an operational ready rate of 95 percent." The temptation to stray all over the map can be strong, especially given "training guidance" that begins at the four-star level and reaches down to the bottom of the food chain with "amplification" at every level. But you must fight to stay focused across the battalion on the nuts and bolts of combat, and that means Soldiers in top physical condition who can hit what they shoot at and keep their equipment up and running. Your job is to force your unit to master the fundamentals. It sounds easy, but it's not. To get there, you need one key ingredient: discipline.

Patton liked to say "there is only one kind of discipline — perfect discipline."

That is an ideal, but one worth striving for. Because you can't

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**From day one, it's critically important that you focus the unit on its core business — killing the enemy and taking ground. Everything else is secondary.**

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be everywhere at once, it is discipline that provides the glue that holds everything together. But it must be a cheerful, willing discipline that permeates the unit, not a harsh exacting one imposed by fear from above.

The trick is to focus on junior leaders and take action to correct breaches of discipline, whether large or small. The best kind of discipline isn't imposed from above through fear; it bubbles up from below as junior leaders react to your leadership and guidance. Units that cheerfully practice the customs and courtesies

of the service are practicing discipline every day. Platoons and companies that conduct rigorous pre-combat inspections, training rehearsals, patrol debriefs, and AARs are laying the foundation of strong discipline. Leaders who take standards seriously and lead from the front — they provide the spark. And troopers who will go to any lengths to uphold the good name of the unit are the cement and concrete and steel that holds it all together.

Once your Soldiers and leaders understand what you want and get after it in an energetic and disciplined way, you're cooking with gas. What's next?

### **Some People Need Killing**

What do infantry battalions do? The long answer is, they do many things — training, maintaining, sustaining, deploying, and conducting combat and stability operations, just for starters. But the short answer is brutally simple: fundamentally, infantry battalions kill people and take ground. A war college classmate of mine, a former commander of a special mission unit, said it best: "At the end of the day, some people need killing. It's our job to do it." In my opinion, we dance around the cold hard truth a little too much. Close combat is the most physically and psychologically traumatic experience there is. From day one, it's critically important that you focus the unit on its core business — killing the enemy and taking ground. Everything else is secondary.

The first order of business is to consider how you're going to get to the fight. Pre-deployment preparation is hard work, and it's commander's business.

Most divisions have detailed standing operating procedures (SOPs) and checklists, but much that is vital is often left out. For example, MILVANs (military-owned demountable containers) and CONEXs (container expresses) are not always part of the maintenance inspection that usually precedes a real-world deployment. How many of yours are serviceable? Are your go-to-war sustainment supplies and packages already uploaded and ready to go? Are your containers marked so you know what's in each one? What about non-deployables? Have you carefully thought through who will constitute your rear detachment? What about batteries for radios, combat optics, laser pointers and so on? Office supplies for your command posts? Are your breach kits, mine marking kits, vehicle load plans and IR markings all up to snuff? I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

Don't wait to sort through the mind numbing details of what it takes to go to war. Because no one can guarantee you'll have time later. As a wise man once said, "you can't get better on your way



to the deployment airfield.”

Once you get into the fight, you will thank the god of battles that you have disciplined small units that can shoot straight. After more than 20 years in uniform, I am convinced that half the battle is letting your squads and platoons fight. By that I mean, stay out of their way and focus on resourcing the fight and making those few key decisions that only you can make. Fight the urge to demand sitreps every few minutes or badger your commanders with orders and suggestions. If you have given them a clear task and purpose and a clear statement of your intent, have faith that they know what to do and will do it. Your men won't let you down.

In my experience, first class units jump right out at you because of how they communicate under stress. Leaders speak calmly and succinctly on the radio, even under fire. There's very little unnecessary chatter. Critical information is passed higher and lower routinely and accurately without prompting. Company commanders cross talk on the command net – and their boss lets them. Status reports flow in regularly. “Commo problems” are few and far between.

It is an unfortunate fact of life that, even in this age of digitization, you will probably not have a complete picture and complete control of your battlespace. You may or may not have accurate and timely intelligence, fire support when you want it, or resupply when you need it. Consequently, try to plan and operate in such a way that you keep your options open as long as possible. In the end, the only intelligence you can absolutely count on is what you develop yourself. The only fires you can be sure you'll have are your own (your buddy next door may have bigger problems than you do or more bad guys to kill).

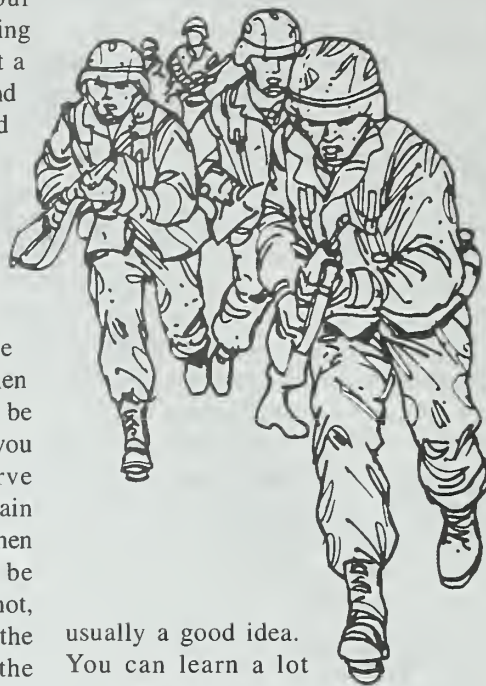
Keeping your options open is usually a function of two things: making contact with small units, not big ones, and properly constituting and employing a reserve. In movement, stick to doctrine. When your security element (flank or rear as well as in front) or advance guard runs into trouble, you are in good shape to mass the bulk of the battalion's combat power on the enemy with both fires and maneuver. If your main body runs into a major contact, you risk being fixed and losing freedom of action.

Even a few casualties will sap your momentum! Be careful, too, about trying to maneuver dismounted troops against a mounted enemy. They are far slower, and if caught in the open, you're in for a bad day.

While many commanders think of the reserve, consciously or unconsciously, as insurance against disaster, it's far better to think of it as your bid to achieve a decision. The reserve need not be large if you are confident in your intelligence, but when uncertainty is high your reserve should be strengthened correspondingly. Ensure you rehearse committing your reserve thoroughly. If you are the brigade main effort, carefully discuss with your boss when and where the brigade reserve will be brought into action. More often than not, it's most effective when chopped to the main effort battalion task force at the decisive place and time, rather than employed independently under brigade control (obviously, this does not apply if the brigade reserve is battalion-sized). When you commit your reserve, give it everything you've got – mortars, artillery, direct fires, even attack aviation and close air support if you have it. Now is the time to confront the enemy with the awesome power of the combined arms team and go for the knockout.

In the defense, the classic errors are failure to resource the counter-reconnaissance fight, neglecting all round security, poor use of fire support and failing to rehearse. Today, a thinking opponent will likely not come at you head on. Instead, he will feel you out, then attack in a soft spot where it hurts as we saw many times in the recent war in Iraq. Large or small, your reserve should be mobile, hard-hitting and well-rehearsed. Put a good man in charge, and be sure to reconstitute your reserve once employed from an uncommitted unit.

Where should you position yourself on the battlefield? There are many schools of thought, but in my opinion commanders tend to rely too much on the map and radio instead of getting forward where they can see and influence the action. Ideally, you should find a covered and concealed location overlooking your main effort with good line of sight and communications to your tactical operations center (TOC). Taking along a small security element is



usually a good idea. You can learn a lot from the sound of the battlefield, and from face-to-face contact with your company commanders in contact. After much trial and error, I concluded that moving mounted, about one terrain feature behind the main body, is usually best. While moving on foot is more “manly” – and clearly necessary at times – generally speaking, your communications, battlefield operating systems (BOS) synchronization, navigation and tactical mobility are much better when mounted. If things go badly, you can quickly move to rally shaken leaders and units. Except in extreme circumstances, try to stay out of the zone of direct fire when you can – losing the battalion commander is never helpful – but I believe you can lead best when well forward and engaged with your troops. In emergencies, when success or failure is at stake, you should not hesitate to go as far forward as you need to win. Your troopers will fight that much harder when they see the “old man” up there with them.

Although good commanders don't spend much time in the TOC, a high performing operations center is absolutely vital to your success. Train your XO to push information and logistics forward, drive the execution matrix and decision support template, keep higher informed and think about the future. Ensure your tactical command post or assault command post is manned and organized to take over for limited periods



if the TOC is hit or moving. If possible, put your Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) commander with the TOC as headquarters commandant. Though some disagree, thinking he should work in the brigade support area, his scouts, mortars and headquarters personnel are forward and the tasks of TOC security and displacement require a seasoned leader. He also provides quality backup if you sustain leader casualties in the TOC.

### A Leader of Leaders

As a practical manner, battalion commanders work with leaders, not Soldiers. You'll spend most of your time working with your leadership to meet your goals. Although you'll have many golden moments with your troopers, your time is best spent training, teaching, coaching, counseling, and mentoring your leaders. Through them, you can touch every Soldier in the battalion. Without them, you won't get past your office door.

Before we talk about your battalion's leaders, a word about your boss is probably in order. There are many schools of thought about how to interact with your next higher, and I would be the first to say that your personal chemistry with your superiors may – for better or worse – be as important as anything you do in command. Having said that, however, I would urge you to be yourself, and never modify your behavior, your values or your decisions in an attempt to impress the boss. Let your actions and your performance, and that of your unit, do your talking for you. That's all good leaders care about anyway. Aping your boss's mannerisms, staging managing events for his benefit, and focusing on style over substance should be as beneath you as they are beneath him.

What do you owe your boss? First, you owe him a trained unit ready to go to war. Next, you owe him candid, tactful and honest feedback about his decisions and directives. You owe him courtesy and respect in public and private. You owe him loyal and cheerful support whether you agree with his guidance or not – and especially when you don't! Never forget that his intent should guide your actions at all times, and always strive to see things through his

eyes and from his perspective. Unless you are asked to do something illegal, immoral, or unethical, you owe your commander your unflinching support, just as you expect from your own commanders.

As for your brother commanders, put all thoughts of personal competition aside. Battalion command can be fun, worthwhile and rewarding when serving with friends, and a bitter pill when commanders become rivals. When your brothers ask for help, say "yes" without hesitation. Work out your issues and troubles in private, behind closed doors, without bothering the "old man." Never pass your problem cases to a neighbor, never badmouth a buddy, and never be a party to someone else's misfortune. If it's your turn in the barrel, step up and pull your load without complaining. The day may come – the day will probably come – when you are in combat in a world of hurt. On that day, you can't afford anything but 100 percent trust and confidence between commanders. Do all you can to play your part. There's a lot at stake, and it's the right thing to do.

What about your own leaders? Let's start with your command sergeant major. I've observed two kinds. The first, and by far the most common, is focused downwards and gains great satisfaction from building teams and particularly in developing young sergeants. This brand of CSM takes his responsibility as a role model seriously and understands how best to lighten your load with sound, timely advice and a mastery of detail. Gains and losses in critical MOSs, what companies need help with this quarter's reenlistment numbers, what rifle squads are or aren't shooting well and why – these and a thousand other invaluable details are at his fingertips.

The second kind of CSM is rare – but you have seen him before. He is focused upwards, worried about his perks, and insists on operating an alternate chain of command by giving personal orders through the NCO chain. Consequently, he is always at odds with the company commanders and field grades. This type of leader sees himself, not as the "sergeant major of the command," but as a sort of commander himself.

If you are blessed to have the first kind of CSM, you'll have few worries and you will realize – more than ever before – why our secret weapon as an Army is the NCO Corps. But if you are less fortunate, you have work to do. No battalion can have two commanders, two competing sets of priorities, or two alternate sets of key leaders – the officers and NCOs – working at cross purposes. If you sense early on you have this problem, tackle it head on and confront your CSM with counseling and specific guidance. If you aren't having success, go outside for help, starting with the brigade CSM. Chances are that other senior leaders see the same thing you do.

Your field grades are a different challenge. They will give you everything you ask for and work until they drop. You can expect them to





be highly proficient, ready to make decisions and intensely interested in the success of the unit. For the first time, you'll have a complete staff of your own, and they will amaze you with their versatility and ability. All you have to do is focus them on your intent – and avoid the temptation to get in their way.

A note of caution may be in order, however. Bear in mind that your “iron majors” are under tremendous pressure to succeed. Only a fortunate few will earn those successive branch qualifying jobs that spell a real opportunity for command. If you're not careful, your high speed majors will work their people to a frazzle to get that last 5 percent of polish on the quarterly training brief or the command and staff slides. And their natural competitiveness may lead to unhealthy friction. Sit them down early and give clear guidance on who does what, and watch out for lights burning in the S3 shop long after quitting time. There'll be times when that's needed, but they should be few and far between. For your XO and S3, this is the last stop (hopefully) before battalion command. Your every action is training them for command. Bear in mind that they will see you in all your moods, at your best and your worst, and act accordingly.

**F**or my money, your company commanders should get the bulk of your time and attention. That doesn't mean you should live in their orderly rooms. They need space and freedom to run their units and develop as independent leaders. But raising them right should be a top priority for you personally. Much of that professional development can be subtle, chatting in the field, during PT or in the mess hall. Some should be more formal, in OPDs, command post exercises and field training exercises designed to hone their troop-leading skills at the company level. Try to remember your own company command experiences, and bear in mind that theirs is perhaps the toughest job in the Army. Companies don't have staffs, and company commanders are still young and comparatively inexperienced. Your captains are under enormous pressure to succeed, and they know it. Anything you can do to lighten their load and build their confidence will make your battalion better.

Some battalion commanders enjoy playing “gotcha,” but the good ones know better. Avoid e-mail and work face to face. Don't task companies with things your staff can do. Ask “what can I do to help?” often. Save harsh words for the rare occasions when they're called for. Praise early and often, and be ready to underwrite honest mistakes that are the price of growth. When company commanders struggle, there are many reasons besides incompetence or lack of effort, and first among them is that they haven't been trained properly for their jobs. And that's your job.

Your company commanders train lieutenants day in and day out, but you have a key role in professionally developing them. Think back to your lieutenant days. Wasn't “the Colonel” a “larger than life” role model for you and your buddies? For better or worse, much of what young officers come to believe about officership is formed in their first assignment by their senior leaders. Your every word and action can influence these young men – tomorrow's senior leaders – in ways you can't imagine. That's a heavy responsibility.

In today's Infantry, lieutenants face a tough challenge. As a body, our platoon sergeants and first sergeants are so talented,

proficient and self-confident that, more than ever, new lieutenants can be intimidated. Don't let them stand on the sidelines or hide out in the arms room or motor pool. They are not apprentice officers. With due regard for youth and inexperience, throw them in the briar patch and insist that they lead.

Many battalion commanders come under pressure, because of inbounds or the need to fill more senior lieutenant jobs, to move new lieutenants before they have spent at least a year in a rifle platoon. In my view, that time should be sacred. Do all you possibly can to fence your rifle platoon leaders for a full year. The payoff down the road is well worth it.

Your best lieutenants will likely end up in the S1, S3 Air, and specialty platoon jobs (support platoon, scouts, and mortars). Your next best will go to company XO jobs. Think carefully about the HHC and AT company XO positions (if your battalion has a Delta Company). Horses are needed there! Always keep in mind that a company XO might have to take over the company in combat at a moment's notice. If you lack confidence in one of them, think twice before moving them into that position.

It's a wonderful thing to see a new second lieutenant join your battalion, green as grass and nervous as a cat. Very quickly they sprout, until before you know it, they have the swagger of seasoned, salty veterans. The transformation is as sudden as it is profound, and one of the command's most satisfying and rewarding experiences. Give your lieutenants good soil to grow in and elbow room for rash, brash mistakes. But draw the line on integrity, lack of effort and safety. They'll stay inside your “white lines” if you're clear about where they are.

As a group, your time spent with lieutenants will be limited, and that's even more true with sergeants. But never forget that sergeants are the heart and soul of the battalion, far more than the officers who come and go. Sergeants are always on the front lines, always in the trenches, always under the gun. If you go to war, your fire teams, squads and platoons will do the fighting, the killing and dying, led by your sergeants. They deserve your respect, your support and your confidence. Be cautious about hemming them in with so many command policy statements and directives that they can't exercise their own judgment. As a rule, they should be left in troop-leading positions longer than officers to provide the continuity and perspective that success demands. Be sensitive to their own professional development needs, however, and never hurt a sergeant's career to solve a short-term problem.

**I** often met with company first sergeants, one on one or as a group. They will give it to you “with the bark on,” and sometimes you'll need thick skin as you listen to their comments and input. They have their fingers on the pulse of their units in a way that your officers can't. When they speak with one voice, listen. If a room full of first sergeants ever agrees on anything, they're likely to be right!

While we're talking about leaders, let's not forget the women who lead your family readiness group. I am deadly serious when I say they are crucial to your success. There is every chance you will take your battalion into harm's way during your command, and a well organized, caring FRG can move mountains to keep things back in the rear on an even keel. Most of your problems



will surface with junior enlisted wives, new to the service and to married life, unused to separations, and always worrying about finances. They carry a particularly heavy burden. Strong company FRGs (often led by sergeants' wives, not necessarily the company commander's spouse) who are well informed about Army support agencies and who focus on young wives make all the difference. Care and nurture these organizations and the wonderful women who lead them. They don't get paid, but their service is priceless.

## **Pulling the Trigger**

There's no doubt in my mind that the hardest part about battalion command was making the tough calls, what one mentor used to call "pulling the trigger." Plenty of commanders can brief well, execute brilliant staff actions, and impress the brass and still lack the moral and spiritual fiber to make a difficult decision. Yet, that is the essence of command.

You'll have almost daily opportunities to make hard calls, and almost as many chances to duck them. When you counsel a subordinate and fail to identify areas needing improvements, you've ducked another one. When you see a clear failure to meet a standard and don't act, you've ducked a hard call again.

In garrison, your toughest calls will invariably involve people. There will be times when all evidence concludes that a particular Soldier or leader is a failure and must leave the unit or the Army. It might be an officer who simply lacks any aptitude for leadership or responsibility, or any potential to improve. It might be an NCO who can't overcome a personal problem that affects his job. It might be a Soldier who just can't adapt to an environment where good order and discipline are the rule. In such a case, doing nothing can be the easier course. You won't have to build a case, or "fight city hall," or directly confront someone with bad news. But it's your job, and no one else's. Once you know the facts and have listened to the advice and recommendation of your subordinates, never be afraid to act. It's what we get paid for.

In combat, the stakes are higher. Making a decision that might get people killed is a daunting prospect. Making a decision to depart from the plan always carries risk. Acting without complete intelligence or before you're 100 percent ready could lead to disaster. And acting without orders might well get you in trouble!

All this is true. But what commander ever won a battle without taking risks or making tough decisions? The Army placed you in command because it believes you have the skills, experience and character to lead Soldiers in combat. No one admires an unruly subordinate who acts rashly, looking for glory and ignoring his boss's orders and intent. But all commanders want subordinates who know their craft and have the confidence to act intelligently and decisively in the chaos and complexity of combat. As I said earlier, when you boil it all down, command is about making decisions. Never be afraid to pull the trigger. That's your job.

## **Go With Your Gut**

If I could offer a final word of advice, it would be to trust yourself when it's time to make the hard calls. You've spent many years

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**In combat, the stakes are higher. Making a decision that might get people killed is a daunting prospect ... As I said earlier, when you boil it all down, command is about making decisions. Never be afraid to pull the trigger. That's your job.**

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building the skills, experience and judgment that got you selected for command. You've proven you have what it takes. Almost every time I went against my better judgment, I regretted it. My brother commanders often told me the same thing. By all means, if time permits avail yourself of the advice and experience of your peers, superiors and subordinates. When it's crunch time, though, go with your gut. You'll be glad you did.

Looking back, I think battalion command was the hardest thing I ever did. Few days were easy, and many were hard as hell. More than the individual tasks you have to perform, the weight of responsibility takes its toll. There will be tough days when bad things happen, and up and down the chain, people are looking to see if you handle adversity as well as you do success.

Yet, I wouldn't have traded the experience for the world. As an infantry battalion commander, you're in charge of a powerful, complex organization that plays a major role in the "Common Defense." Those colors in your headquarters tell amazing stories about sacrifice and heroism; if you look hard you can almost see the blood stains and the shot holes they carry. Every trooper bursting with pride as you pin on his EIB; every sergeant you see shouting "follow me" over his shoulder; every young officer you come upon, huddled in deep conversation with your CSM; these and a thousand other sights, sounds and lasting memories will make every moment special and worthwhile.

As a young man, I once asked my father, an old infantry colonel, what branch I ought to choose. He grunted, "the infantry," and when I asked him why he said, "because it's the hardest," and walked away.

Many years later, I think I understand. He didn't walk away because I asked a dumb question. He walked away because he missed it. So do I, and so will you when it's all over.

So good luck, Colonel. Today's world is a dangerous place, and you have work to do. I know your troopers will be lucky to have you taking care of them and their families. We old timers will look for you on the high ground. I know you'll do us proud.



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**Lieutenant Colonel Richard D. Hooker, Jr.** commanded the 2d Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

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# BREAKING CONTACT

## Tips to overcome common weaknesses

BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN R. SCALES

Imagine a small patrol deep in enemy territory, intent upon getting to their objective. Patrol members are lulled by routine, fatigued by nervous anticipation, and moving with heavy rucksacks. Suddenly, shots are fired — a chance contact with an enemy force! Patrol members are transformed from their prior state of fatigue into a state of intense fear. Sure, they talked about chance contact and rehearsed battle drills, but what is really going on? Where is the enemy, how many are there, what are they up to, and what does the terrain look like? This is probably not like the rehearsal, but it should be.

This patrol is facing the most dangerous situation possible. Surprised, possibly outnumbered, no help nearby — destruction is imminent. The patrol must act, by either attacking immediately or breaking contact. The idea of an immediate attack has merit — often the enemy is more surprised than the patrol — but, unless the patrol already has taken casualties, the better choice is usually to break contact. After all, the patrol has another mission, and continuing the engagement may result in casualties that prevent the accomplishment of that mission.

Because chance contact is so dangerous, infantry, Ranger, and Special Forces units practice this contingency often. They rehearse battle drills on varying terrain and in different circumstances, culminating in live-fire exercises. Unfortunately, the loss of many seasoned veterans and the curtailment of training time and resources in recent years have left some Soldiers unsure of how to execute this difficult operation properly.

During the past several years, I have witnessed numerous training events conducted by small units of both the Active Army and the Army National Guard that were centered on breaking contact. In every

case, I noticed actions that probably would have led to unnecessary casualties for the unit.

The tips below are my suggestions on how to overcome the weaknesses I have seen in the past three years. Each tip addresses one of these weaknesses.

### Prior to Contact

A key determinant of the outcome from a chance contact is the training conducted beforehand. Thorough and practical rehearsals and standing operating procedures (SOPs) are essential. Also essential are the individual, leader, and collective skills exercised while the patrol is moving, which prepare the patrol for success.

Rehearsals should address as many different situations as possible in the time available. Contact may take place at danger areas, and breaking contact should be a part of the rehearsal for crossing each type of danger area. Because contact may also occur elsewhere, a selection of other situations — different terrain, enemy situation, and friendly status (moving or stationary) — must be used. There will be no standard answer for every situation, because all are so different. The purpose of rehearsal is to develop a repertoire of actions that the patrol leader can apply to meet whatever comes up.

The patrol leader is key to putting the patrol in the right posture to meet a chance contact. He must choose routes that minimize exposure, offer easy ways to bypass or avoid the enemy, and avoid likely ambush sites. He should direct the use of proper techniques, such as bounding overwatch to cross large danger areas that cannot be avoided. He ensures that his point element remains alert and not tired, and that they keep him informed of danger areas or signs of the enemy.

The point man must be intelligent, alert, and well-trained. And he should carry a lighter load than the rest. Although he is under the observation and control of the patrol leader, his actions determine his own fate and that of the entire patrol. Moving too fast is a common mistake. The point man is a bird dog — he moves a little, then sniffs the air and slowly scans the area before moving again. His body movements are slow and fluid, not jerky.

The rest of the patrol emulates his movements. They also move slowly, from one point that could offer cover to another, then stop and scan their sector. In particular, a right-handed Soldier who must monitor a sector to his right should force himself to pause every few steps and slowly sweep his sector with weapon and eyes, just as the rear security sweeps the rear of the patrol. (Some recommend that the Soldier with a sector on the right carry his weapon left-handed, but I'm not convinced this is effective). Soldiers are properly camouflaged for the area so they blend into areas that offer cover.

The terrain, lighting conditions, and weather in the area determine the proper interval between Soldiers. This interval is the maximum distance at which each Soldier — having taken cover because of incoming fire — can still see the Soldiers on either side of him. In some cases this may seem too close (one grenade will get them all), but the disadvantages are outweighed by the ability to pass along orders and coordinate actions — and by the psychological support Soldiers get from not feeling alone when the bullets are flying. (A technique I used to train proper interval was to blow a whistle periodically — meaning take cover — while practicing movement techniques, then having the Soldiers evaluate the positions they had assumed.)





Private First Class Hugo A. Baray-Vasquez

*Private First Class John Brandon of the 2/22d Infantry Regiment, Provides security during a patrol in a village in Afghanistan.*

### **During Contact**

Upon contact, Soldiers instinctively take cover and then consider what to do next. The patrol leader will assess the situation, then issue orders. Soldiers will fire on known or suspected enemy positions, but only if the situation is clear to them — they will be concerned about firing into friendly troops and about giving their position away.

The patrol leader must make a quick decision. Given what he knows and what he sees and hears around him, he must choose a battle drill. If he established a base of fire before contact (as in bounding overwatch) — and did not inadvertently mask its fire by bounding in front of it — he may be able to use fire and maneuver to break contact. If his lead element is in a wedge, he may already have a base of fire; if not, he must establish one, using his crew-served weapons, if available. If some or all of the patrol is pinned down, fire and movement by individuals or buddy teams may be the only viable battle drill. If terrain restricts the patrol to a narrow lane such as a jungle trail, he may elect to initiate a peel. If the patrol is lucky enough to be within range of supporting arms, then mortars, artillery, or aircraft can be a welcome addition to this base of fire. Given a base of fire and the terrain, lighting conditions, and apparent enemy situation, he then orders the patrol to conduct a battle drill that takes advantage of all these factors.

One important complication occurs if the contact has resulted in a friendly casualty, particularly if the casualty is not ambulatory. Patrol members must make sure the patrol leader is told immediately

when someone is hit so he can make the proper decision. In this case, there is little choice. The patrol must attack if at all possible and secure the area around the casualty. Often the casualty is the point man, closest to the enemy. The designated medic quickly treats the wound while the patrol leader evaluates his options: Can he secure the area and get a medevac, or must he have the wounded Soldier carried out? If the latter, how will the Soldier be carried, and where will he be taken? Must the patrol leader abandon equipment and possibly the mission itself? Although he would have discussed these options during the patrol order, the detailed circumstances may change the answers. In any case, the leader executes one battle drill to secure the casualty and may then have to execute another to carry out the evacuation.

Usually the first step of either battle drill is to inhibit enemy target acquisition and suppress enemy fire with a barrage of grenades, both fragmentation and smoke. This works well, as long as those who use smoke keep the wind direction in mind. One technique is to throw smoke first, then fragmentation grenades, so the smoke will have time to build a screen. Soldiers initiate movement upon frag detonation.

Individual and buddy team movement techniques form the heart of executing a successful break in contact. Buddy teams are important because the two buddies can work together, one moving while the other provides covering fire. This greatly reduces the need for the patrol leader to manage individuals, and it cuts down on the shouting of commands with the possibility of misunderstanding or of not being heard at all. Each Soldier must take short bounds, three seconds or less, moving from one piece of cover to another. Bounding too far not only exposes the Soldier, but also puts the other patrol members at risk because — unlike fire and movement during an attack — the withdrawing Soldier turns his back to the enemy and to his buddy as he moves. A long bound may cause the Soldier to become confused as to his buddy's position and may shoot him by mistake.

Soldiers use micro-terrain, perhaps a fold on the ground only two or three inches high as well as the more visible tree trunks, logs, and bushes. Whenever possible, the new position should be chosen before starting movement.

Often during an attack, you will see Soldiers who are bounding on line converge to the center of the objective and bunch up as they get there. The same holds true when withdrawing. Soldiers will tend to merge into a clump, particularly if they were in a file when the contact started. Members of the buddy teams on the flanks of the formation must remember to keep their distance. Leaders need to keep their Soldiers spread out to avoid presenting too lucrative a target, and to prevent masking each other's fires as well.

### **After Contact**

Unless otherwise designated by the patrol leader, the patrol will withdraw to the last rally point, a terrain feature back along the route of movement. Here the patrol will regroup, redistribute ammunition, and receive the fragmentary order on what they will do next. Although time here should be kept to a minimum to avoid any pursuers, the patrol leader needs to check his Soldiers quietly



## TRAINING NOTES

and transmit his orders for movement to an alternate route. Orders need to cover the route, tentative rally points, and directions on how to disguise the patrol's trail. Shouting or loud noises may give away the position to an aggressive enemy.

It is here that training and combat diverge. In combat, the leader continues the mission. In training, the leader must visually check all weapons to ensure safety. After the rest of the training, the after-action review (AAR) begins.

The AAR is led by the patrol leader, or preferably by an experienced outside observer but without dominating it. He sets the stage and then brings each patrol member into the AAR to discuss his actions. Each segment of the rehearsal, from start to finish, should be covered in detail. If possible, he should walk through the lane again, discussing each phase in turn. The patrol leader should take particular care to explain each decision he made and each order he gave. All patrol members need to understand the rationale behind the decisions and any artificial limitations imposed (such as range limits, practicing night tactics in daylight before night execution, etc.). Further, each SOP item, every action taken by a patrol member, and every decision needs to be open to challenge and discussion. If the training is to succeed, everyone must understand what happened, what they did, how individual actions fit in the overall picture, and how all these can be improved.

### Recommendations

Our Soldiers must spend more time working on dangerous situations such as chance contact. They need to perform evolutions such as breaking contact on different live-fire ranges and in varying terrain types. Crawl, walk, run, sprint — depending on the particulars of the unit and typical missions, which might be day, night vision goggles, stretcher casualty, night without goggles, etc. A small set of battle drills known to all is far better than trying to develop a different procedure for every imaginable situation. The real key to success is to develop that repertoire of battle drills by practicing them under varying and difficult conditions.

The most important asset in a successful training program is the experienced Soldier from outside — such as the battalion command sergeant major — who monitors and critiques the patrol's actions. Even with his help, we will never be perfect, but we can meet the goal of continual improvement.

The following are some suggested battle drills:

- Patrol bounding overwatch.
- Setting up a base of fire from the patrol formation after contact.
- Fire and maneuver to withdraw (given a base of fire).
- Fire and maneuver to attack and secure

a friendly casualty (given a base of fire).

- Fire and movement to withdraw.
- Fire and movement to attack and secure a friendly casualty.
- Reaction to effective near ambush.
- Specialized techniques appropriate to mission or expected terrain.

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**Brigadier General John R. Scales**, served as the Deputy Commanding General (RC), U.S. Army Special Forces Command from January 1997 until his retirement in February 2001. He was commissioned in the U.S. Army in 1970 after completing Reserve Officer Training. He served with the 1/58th Infantry in the Republic of Vietnam from December 1971 until May 1972.

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### EVALUATION CHECKLIST — BREAKING CONTACT

TASK	YES	NO	NA	COMMENTS
Designate viable rally points				
Proper route selection				
Appropriate patrol movement formation				
Alertness to sector and movement of patrol members				
Proper camouflage				
Technique and individual actions at danger area				
Maintain proper interval				
Take good cover on contact and return fire or other action if dictated by SOP				
Adoption of appropriate battle drill by patrol leader quickly				
Clear orders by patrol leader				
Proper use of crew-served weapons and/or supporting arms if available				
Mask position with smoke				
Fragmentation grenades to initiate move				
Movement controlled by buddy team				
Even rate of fire				
Use of micro-terrain				
Short bounds				
Maintaining dispersion and interval				
Consolidate at rally point				
Clear, timely further orders				
Leader clears weapons				
Good, detailed AAR				
Universal participation in AAR				



# MOUT Training During Peacekeeping Deployments

CAPTAIN ERIK KRIVDA

Peacekeeping operations in Kosovo make it extremely difficult to maintain collective combat skills. Units are challenged during any peacekeeping operation to maintain individual skills of rifle marksmanship, physical training, and to keep an aggressive warrior mentality. A solution was developed to create a Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) Academy within the company. This training took one platoon away from the company standard sector patrols for a 10-day period and provided the platoon a great opportunity to hone their warfighting skills.

The base model of the 10-day training cycle was developed from a similar training program used by the U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory. The USMC Warfighting Laboratory was very helpful and sent us electronic copies of the course program of instruction (POI) and copies of the individual class slides. Using this as a base product, the company officers reviewed the POI in conjunction with the current company MOUT strengths, weaknesses, and resources available and were able to develop a POI adaptable to the company in Kosovo.

The base POI consisted of a five-day classroom instruction along with practical exercise to re-enforce each day's instruction. In addition, the five days of instruction was incremental for the platoon's Soldiers and leaders. The first day started teaching basic weapons carry, engagement, and movement techniques, and culminated on the last day with how to plan and conduct platoon level mechanized and armor operations in an urban environment. This program was able to instruct not only the leaders of the platoon, but the Soldiers in both basic skills and leadership employment — something needed by all members of the platoon during fast paced urban combat operations.

One key shortage for the Soldiers stationed at Camp Monteith was the lack of rehearsal facilities for practical exercises. Soldiers could practice on the office spaces and living spaces provided to the company in the sea-huts, however to provide a variety of room dimensions rooms had to be fabricated. Fabricated rooms were developed by a simple method of building wood stands and stapling either packaging material or wrapping paper to the stands to fabricate walls. Brown & Root contractors created multiple stands consisting of a 10-foot 2x4 standing vertically held up by four 3-foot 2x4 legs that stand independently. This provided the company with the ability to create multiple scenarios for squad and team leaders to practice on individual rooms, create hallways, and build multiple rooms buildings for up to platoon level rehearsals. Plus, the use of free standing legs with either paper or packaging material stapled to them allowed the platoon leader and squad leaders to change the scenario each time making it more complex as the squad

or team progressed in ability.

The first five days of the academy gives platoon members a base level of knowledge, the second and final phase of the training was to conduct a three-day field training exercise (FTX) to reinforce the skills taught. Day six of the training module would be an FTX prep day. This gave the platoon NCOs the time to gather the high intensity conflict (HIC) equipment needed for the FTX and have adequate time for pre-combat checks (PCCs) and pre-combat inspections (PCIs) before deploying to the field. The training area used was a very unique area for units to use, a completely abandoned town in Kosovo. The town, Vernez, was a Croatian village southeast of Vitina that was abandoned during the war in 1999 when the residents left to move back to Croatia. This gave ample room for the platoon to train in more than 150 different types of buildings ranging from farmhouses and residential houses to commercial storefronts and walled compounds.

The company would spend three days



Courtesy photos

*Soldiers move to another building during MOUT training in Kosovo. The FTX was conducted in an abandoned Croatian village, which gave ample room for the platoon to train using farmhouses, residential houses, commercial storefronts and walled compounds.*





*Soldiers from C Company rehearse corner procedures.*

living in the town. Day one consisted of movement out to the village, and gave the squad leaders, platoon leader, and platoon sergeant time for on the ground rehearsals with MILES (multiple-integrated laser engagement system) and blanks. The platoon spent the day typically in a crawl, walk, and run phase for both squad and platoon-level operations taking the opportunity to do both daylight and limited visibility training with night vision goggles (NVGs). Day two started with three similar squad evaluated lanes with the opposing force (OPFOR) provided by the company headquarters platoon where each squad spent the morning training on three tasks: react to contact, enter and clear a building, enter and clear a walled compound. The last task is not from FM 7-8 or FM 7-7J; however, the nature of buildings and housing areas in typical Muslim areas normally consists of some variation of a walled living compound consisting of

multiple buildings all interconnected. This was the final complex task for the squad to complete and really challenged the squad. In the afternoon, the platoon would transition into platoon operations combining the platoon lanes into three missions for the platoon: react to contact, deliberate attack, and react to ambush. This gave the platoon ample opportunity to progress in complexity of operations and missions during the day. This time spent maneuvering the platoon was an excellent challenge for the platoon leader.

Although, the company was actually an MTOE (modification table of organization and equipment) Bradley fighting vehicle (BFV) equipped company, the use of BFV was not allowed inside the town. The initial solution was to use HMMWVs (high mobility, multi-purpose wheeled vehicles) with an M240B mounted on top to simulate the BFV; however, the town's terrain was too rugged and mountainous to support wheeled or tracked vehicle movement through a majority of the areas. This ensured the FTX would be a dismounted fight only, and the

Soldiers typically assigned to the BFV section were used as additional members of the three rifle squads.

At night, the platoon went back to squad operations and conducted the squad lanes, again followed by platoon-level operations at night. The difference between the day lanes and the night lanes was that at night more specific intelligence to enemy location was given to the squad and platoon leader. This narrowed down the training objective to a deliberate attack, instead of overwhelming the Soldiers with the task of conducting movement to contact operations in an Urban Environment in limited visibility, a highly complex task.

The final day of the FTX included two platoon-level missions, where the OPFOR commander — the company master gunner — was not restricted to specific buildings or limits on deadly force. One mission kept the OPFOR in the defense, followed by the second mission having the OPFOR start at the far side of the town and move towards the platoon in a meeting engagement. Both missions challenged the platoon in a much harder scenario than the day before; taking away restrictions placed on the OPFOR basically allowed a challenging force on force fight for the last two missions. Finishing the FTX, the platoon would be brought back to Camp Monteith to conduct a day of recovery and refit in preparation to return to the standard peacekeeping patrols of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission.

The ability of the company to pull one platoon at a time out of sector, conduct high intensity urban warfare training, and then allow them the time to rest and refit provided a much needed break for Soldiers conducting the KFOR mission. Bottom line: Infantrymen often have to kill people and break things. Due to their discipline and professionalism, they can perform peacekeeping missions to standard. However, the problem for leaders is to keep up their Soldiers' basic skills and morale, and leaders need to be creative at times to find time to train when and where they can.

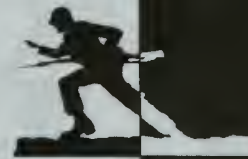


*Soldiers complete a night rehearsal wearing NVGs.*

**Captain Erik Krivda** is currently serving as the company commander of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.



# INFANTRY CAREER NOTES



## **Soldiers in CENTCOM eligible for \$5,000 re-up bonus**

Soldiers who re-enlist in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility this fiscal year are now eligible for a lump-sum bonus of about \$5,000, and the bonus is also retroactive for Soldiers who re-enlisted from Oct. 1 until now.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld approved the Targeted Selective Re-enlistment Bonus (TSRB) Dec. 17 for active-component Soldiers in CENTCOM. National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan are also eligible for a re-enlistment bonus under a different program. They can receive \$2,500 for a three-year re-enlistment and \$5,000 for committing to stay six years in their component.

TSRB for the active-component was first offered to Soldiers this fall during a two-week window that closed Sept. 30, said Sergeant Major James A. Vales. Vales is the Army's senior retention manager and retention proponent for the Army's G-1 at the Pentagon. The TSRB, as Vales called it, was introduced in September to active-component Soldiers serving in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Korea because the Army was 6,000 Soldiers behind its goal of re-enlisting 51,000 for Fiscal Year 2003.

To meet that goal, the Army offered a flat-rate \$5,000 re-enlistment bonus for Soldiers. The only catch, though, was they had to re-up from Sept. 17-30.

Unlike the first bonus's flat rate of \$5,000, the new bonus is calculated on two scales — called A Zone and B Zone — and based on a Soldier's rank, time in grade and years in service, Vales said. That means more or maybe less money coming in, he said. According to an example Vales gave, a private first class with less than two years in service would be in the A Zone and would receive \$6,784.50 for a three-year re-enlistment. A staff sergeant in B Zone with over six years in the Army would receive \$6,612.30.

The program, with the retroactive period

to Oct. 1 included, will cost about \$100 million for Fiscal Year 2004, he said. To receive the bonus, Soldiers have to re-up for a minimum of three years. That time will also include a 12-month stabilization at their unit, Vales said. The Army is also trying to keep the bonus unit specific, meaning units already down range — like the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan and 1st Armored Division in Iraq, Vales said. Title 37 of the U.S. Federal Code states that the Department of Defense only pays a bonus to critical skills, he explained. The Army determined that any MOS in those three countries was critical. To reinstate the bonus, Vales said a change was made to the code for Soldiers in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, Korea was bumped off the list of countries that Soldiers could receive the bonus, though Soldiers there are still eligible for a Military Occupational Skill-based bonus, he added.

Additionally, Soldiers deploying to Iraq, Kuwait or Afghanistan with the Fort Hood, Texas-based 1st Cavalry Division, or the Schofield Barracks, Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division are also being targeted for another type of bonus, Vales said.

(Article by Specialist Bill Putnam, Army News Service)

## **Mobilized RC officers now competitive for promotion**

Mobilized reserve-component officers who have been selected for promotion now have a chance to pin their new rank on about the same time their counterparts at home do.

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Reginald J. Brown signed a memorandum Dec. 17 that changes the requirement for Army Reserve and National Guard promotion-selectee officers to first be in position of higher grade before pinning that higher rank on.

Under the new policy, Reserve and National Guard personnel managers may match mobilized officers who have been selected for promotion and project them into

higher-grade vacancies in units near the officers' home stations and then authorize those officers to pin their new rank on while serving in their current positions.

While the old policy ensured the Army Reserve and National Guard did not exceed their Congressional authorized grade-strength ceilings, mobilized officers have been put at a disadvantage in being unable to fill the higher grade slots due to being deployed, personnel officials said.

Under the old policy, officers who had been selected by a promotion board and not mobilized had the advantage, as they could seek, apply for, and take higher-grade positions soon after being selected for promotion. The Reserve-Component Stop Loss announced earlier this year requires all Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, including promotion-selectee officers, to remain with their unit through deployment and an additional three months. That means mobilized officers might have to wait up to 18 months before being able to fill a higher-grade position.

Deployed officers who are projected against a current higher-grade vacancy now will be able to pin on the new rank and get paid for that higher grade while deployed. Those officers have up to six months after being demobilized to take the new position or find and take a position of equal rank. Those who do not will be transferred into the Individual Ready Reserve at the higher grade.

Reserve and National Guard personnel managers are currently working on how each will implement the new policy. All Reserve unit vacancies can be viewed by rank via the Army Knowledge Online portal through the Human Resources Command — St. Louis homepage.

For other Reserve questions on the new policy, contact Steve Stromvall or Col. Geoffrey Jones, (404) 464-8492, or e-mail Steven.Stromvall@usarc-emh2.army.mil.

National Guard officers with questions on the new policy should contact their State Adjutant General Office.

(Article by Joe Burlas, ARNEWS)



# BOOK REVIEWS



***Delivering the Goods. The Art of Managing Your Supply Chain.* Damon Schechter with Gordon Sander. John Wiley & Sons, 2002. Glossary, references, index. 254 pp.** Reviewed by Christopher B. Timmers.

Given our recent thorough, brilliant, and crushing defeat of Iraqi forces, including the humiliation of the "elite" Republican Guard divisions of Saddam Hussein, this book could have been good, or even great in terms of explaining the importance of logistics to military victories. It could have provided interesting or unique insights into the importance logistics in corporate warfare. Instead, the authors offer a fare of trite, poorly written clichéd prose that is irritating to read, glib, and sloppy.

The first part of the text deals with commanders in history who understood the importance of keeping troops supplied while on campaign. The authors give a fairly even assessment of various commanders as logisticians: Napoleon — poor; Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar — excellent; the Duke of Wellington — again, excellent; George Patton — the less said the better (although he had the annoying habit of always winning). But I couldn't avoid the distraction of atrocious prose (or editing). On page 23, we read that Norman Schwarzkopf was "...no mean student of military history himself..." and just five pages later that Roman general Scipio Africanus was "...no mean commander himself." On page 31, one reads that the failure to accord logistics and their proper role and importance "directly influenced the fourth Crusade of 1096." Crusaders were unable to pay money-minded Venetians for shipping. "Unfortunately, American Express traveler checks had not yet been invented. No crusader should leave home without them." Really? How cute.

An equally distracting passage occurs on page 45 when the authors discuss General Grant's orders concerning the destruction of Confederate railways.

"'Burn up the remainder of the Black River (railway) Bridge,' he wrote to another subaltern later that spring..." Another subaltern? Subaltern is not a term used in the U.S. Army. It is British and refers to an officer below the rank of captain. A general commanding an army wouldn't issue an order to a junior officer, but rather another general or a subordinate colonel. This sloppiness slows the pace of the narrative and makes the book more of a chore to read. But what about the civilian aspect of the book?

The balance of the book revolves around promoting what the writers call the Tri-Level view, a model "for viewing a company's supply chain from a global perspective."

This model features a top level — physical assets; a middle level — business processes; and a bottom level — measurements by which one tracks the physical flow of goods. Assets, processes, measurements are typical B school lingo that, only with difficulty, can be concretely applied to businesses. Yes, there are copious quotes from blurb writers on the jacket of the book and on its opening pages. But of the 17 endorsements on the opening pages, only five are from businessmen employed by real corporations. The balance are from academics, writers, or past government employees, including (and especially) William "Gus" Pagonis, the logistician whose efforts helped ensure victory in Desert Storm.

The study of logistics, its importance, and links between marketing and military campaigns can certainly be a worthy topic for both military men and civilian leaders. But for a fair, accurate, and scholarly treatment of these subjects, *Delivering the Goods* is not the text to consult. The definitive work is yet to be written.

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***Devil at My Heels.* Louis Zamperini with David Resin. HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2003. 292 pp. \$24.95.**

Reviewed by Second Lieutenant James A. Capobianco, U.S. Army.

*Devil at My Heels* is the remarkable account of an ordinary man faced with extraordinary circumstances. "Lucky" Louis Zamperini has experienced a life filled with lessons for us all. His story is not a mere chronological autobiography, rather, it is a saga of a survivor who relinquishes hatred and finds personal redemption through forgiveness. As a troubled youth growing up in Torrance, California, Louie Zamperini found direction on his high school track team. His talents would lead him to a place on the 1936 Olympic team and forever shape his future.

As the reality of America's entrance into WWII neared, Zamperini volunteered for service as a B-24 bombardier in the U.S. Army Air Corps. While flying a search and rescue mission, Zamperini's plane malfunctioned and crashed over the Pacific. He and pilot Russell Phillips managed to survive 47 days on a rubber raft with no provisions amidst menacing swarms of sharks. Their only sustenance was collected rain water, three albatrosses and two shark livers. After having drifted more than 2,000 miles, they rejoiced at the sight of land; however, their excitement quickly turned to horror at the sight of an approaching vessel with a "Rising Sun" flag atop the mast.

Having been "rescued" by the Japanese, Zamperini was introduced to life as a POW. During his two years of captivity, "Lucky" Louie survived impending and almost certain decapitation; he endured beatings, torture, and humiliation which surpassed that of his peers. His name was withheld from the International Red Cross. He was declared killed in action by the United States Government and mourned as a national hero. The Japanese intended to exploit his fame; they treated him without mercy in hope that he would break and make propaganda broadcasts. Despite their repeated efforts, at no point did he acquiesce to the demands of his captors.



The Japanese proved that while they could degrade and humiliate his body, his will was indomitable.

Louis Zamperini returned as a war hero. He mingled with Hollywood stars and high society. He was leading a life he had earlier only dreamed of; yet, he simply could not vanquish the nightmares of his past and the haunting image of his most vicious captor — the “Bird.” Unable to bear the torment of his past, Louie turned to alcohol. He became a drunkard filled with rage and apathy. Having hit rock bottom, Louie searched within himself and found redemption through faith and forgiveness.

The memoir of Louis Zamperini is more than a story of survival; it is a testament to the human spirit. A man with meager beginnings, Zamperini demonstrated that a strong will coupled with tenacity and perseverance can overcome the mightiest of challenges. “Lucky” Louie began life as a hard-nosed loner, but he soon grasped that through dedication and teamwork an individual can gain personal validation while serving towards a higher good. This book is ideal for those who are in search of inspiration. It is a compelling account of a commonly flawed man who accepted the sacrifices of service and survived with honor.

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***Theodore Roosevelt Jr.: The Life of a War Hero.* H. Paul Jeffers. Presidio, 2001. 282 pp. \$27.95.** Reviewed by Colonel Cole C. Kingseed, U.S. Army, Retired

Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., was a hero of two wars. The youngest regimental commander in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) of World War I, Roosevelt also served as assistant division commander of the 4th Infantry Division that landed on Utah Beach on D-Day. At the time of his unexpected death from a heart attack on July 12, 1944, Roosevelt had been scheduled to assume command of the 90th Infantry Division. His premature demise generated widespread praise from the senior echelons of the Allied Expedition Force (AEF). General George Patton called Roosevelt “the bravest Soldier I ever knew.”

In the first biography of the eldest son of the nation’s 26th president, former broadcast journalist and historian H. Paul

Jeffers has brought “Ted” Roosevelt to life. Having written several biographies of President Theodore Roosevelt, Jeffers is well-qualified to write a biography of the president’s eldest son. In a sense, the lives of father and son became intertwined, with both dedicated to a career of public service and both ultimately receiving the Medal of Honor.

Matriculating to Harvard in 1905, the younger Roosevelt accompanied his father to England following the ex-president’s departure from the White House in 1909. When Congress declared war against Germany in 1914, “Teddy” resigned his position as a partner in an investment backing firm and joined the Officers’ Reserve Corps. Within months, he was on his way to France as a result of a personal request from the ex-president to General John J. Pershing, the commanding general of the AEF. In France, Teddy earned his combat spurs, first in command of a battalion at Cantigny in May 1918, then as the 26th Infantry Regiment’s commander in the last weeks of the Meuse-Argonne offensive. By Armistice Day, he was himself a legitimate war hero with several recommendations for medals of valor.

During the interwar period, Teddy Roosevelt remained in the forefront of publicity. Always in the footsteps of his father, he struggled to measure up to the former president. In the process he helped organize the American Legion to generate national support for a national veterans’ organization and emerged as a prominent member of New York state politics. Subsequent assignments as assistant secretary of the Navy, governor of Puerto Rico, and governor general of the Philippines highlighted his public career. Defeated in his run for New York governor in 1924, Ted spent several years imitating his father by traveling the world in search of adventure and exploration.

In the early 1940s and with war clouds gathering, he petitioned Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall to return to active duty. Marshall complied and ordered Roosevelt to report to the 1st Division at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, as deputy commanding general. Now a brigadier general, Roosevelt performed with distinction, first in North Africa, then in Sicily. He deployed to England in June 1942 and never returned to the United States.

Regrettably, Jeffers dedicates a scant 50

pages to Roosevelt’s military career in World War II. Although his subject led a full life, Roosevelt’s actions in the 20th century’s greatest conflict cemented his place in history. As assistant division commander of the 1st Infantry Division, Roosevelt established his reputation as a hard-driving general officer who extracted the best from the men in the Big Red One. His subsequent relief, along with division commander Major General Terry de la Mesa Allen, in Sicily is relegated to two pages. To his credit, Jeffers dedicates a full chapter to D-Day, the day when Roosevelt — at 57 and the only general to hit the beaches in the initial assault wave — performed magnificently and was recommended for the Medal of Honor.

If the book has a setback, it lies in the fact that Jeffers is overly enamored of his subject. Roosevelt was as much responsible as Allen was for the 1st Division’s cavalier attitude that perturbed Bradley and led to the relief of the division’s two senior officers. More careful editing would also have enhanced the text. Bradley was not “the supreme commander” of the Sicilian campaign. These observations aside, Jeffers has written a fine biography that unfortunately leaves the reader asking for more detail on the war years of Teddy Roosevelt, Jr., and the command style that made him such a hero in the eyes of the Soldiers of the Big Red One.

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***The Order of the Death’s Head: The Story of Hitler’s SS.* Heinz Hohne. Penguin Books, 2001. (Originally published in 1971.) 690 Pages, photos, maps. \$17.85, Softbound.** Reviewed by Colonel Cole C. Kingseed, U.S. Army, Retired.

No organization in human history has evoked universal condemnation so much as Hitler’s SS, the *Schutzstaffel* of the National Socialist Party. Over the course of the Nazi regime, the SS murdered millions of European Jews, manned the divisions that carried the death’s head symbol across Europe, and dominated virtually every aspect of German life. In the words of one junior SS officer, they considered themselves a “new form of religious sect with its own rites and customs.” History’s judgment is far harsher.



In the most complete analysis of *Reichsführer-SS* leader Heinrich Himmler's secret organization, German journalist Heinz Hohne has provided the most comprehensive history of the unit Hitler used in exercising dictatorial command of Nazi Germany. Organized in the summer of 1925, the SS evolved from a monolithic organization directed by the "demonic will of one man" to a "bizarre nonsensical affair, devoid of all logic." According to Hohne, the SS was a product of accident and automatism, dominated by idealistic criminals, place-seekers and romantics.

In tracing the evolution of the SS, Hohne begins in the turbulent post-war spring of 1919 in the aftermath of World War I. The same socioeconomic conditions that witnessed the rise of Hitler and the formation of the Nazi Party also bore witness to the growing influence of Himmler. By the time Hitler was appointed Chancellor in January 1933, Himmler had ingratiated himself to Hitler by demonstrating that he was the most qualified Nazi who was "so obviously preoccupied with his Führer's security." More than ever, Hitler came to rely on him as a man who could marshal the resources to execute the Führer's eradication of the European Jewry.

The Final Solution justified Hitler's increasing confidence in *Reichsführer-SS* Himmler. So dominant was the Order of the Death's Head, that one observer noted in 1945 that the Order had taken possession of all power in Nazi Germany, sometimes openly. By the end of 1944, only these two men mattered in Germany. As Hohne sees it, even Himmler succumbed to the perception of SS omnipotence. Viewing himself as the "crown prince" of the Nazi regime, Himmler gradually became as egomaniacal as the Führer. Appointed commander of Army Group Vistula to stem the irresistible Soviet advance in the spring of 1945, Himmler witnessed his eroding political influence within Hitler's inner circle. When he was replaced by another general on March 20, Himmler's vision of himself as warlord was extinguished. So too was his political influence.

Faced with the loss of Hitler's confidence, Himmler dissociated himself from his Führer and openly sought to save his own skin and that of the SS. By late April, Hitler discovered that Himmler had

been in secret communications with the Western Allies to arrange a negotiated settlement of the war. Hitler summarily dismissed him, branding him as a traitor to the Nazi regime. Two days later, Hitler was dead, followed by Himmler's own suicide on May 23 after his capture by British military police. With Himmler's death, so too died the SS Order which Hohne characterizes as "the fearsome instrument, symbol of an epoch, one that had reflected all the crime to which men can be led by lust for power, glorification of the State, the cult of personality, and indiscriminating servility."

In the final analysis, Hohne has provided a superb history. Separate appendices outline the efficacy of the SS in the destruction of the European Jewry. Equally intriguing is Hohne's assessment of why Germans joined the SS and remained so fanatically devoted to its precepts. According to the author, German males enlisted to satisfy two innate yearnings peculiar to the German nation: to belong to a military community promising fame, security, and the glitter of martial exercises, and to form part of an elite, an all-powerful secret society. The SS Order provided the answer to such daydreams and juvenile aspirations.

Has Germany learned its lesson? Hohne doesn't offer an answer, stating simply that the history of the SS will continue to haunt Germany by its terrifying lust for power.

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***Phantom Soldier: The Enemy's Answer to U.S. Firepower.* H. John Poole. Posterity Press, 2001. 338 Pages. \$14.95, Softbound.** Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Harold E. Raugh, Jr., U.S. Army, Retired.

The middle of the 20th century seems to have marked a watershed in patterns of warfare. Before that time, and most notably in the 19th century, non-Western armies wanting to fight Western armies had to adopt Western military discipline, tactics, training, and technology to avoid defeat.

Since the end of World War II, this pattern has begun to change. Western armed forces fighting non-Western opponents have been defeated, as were the French in Vietnam and in Algeria, the Soviets in Afghanistan, and the Americans in Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia. Author H. John Poole, a former U.S. Marine Corps staff NCO and small-unit trainer, reveals

numerous aspects of the Oriental and other non-western ways of warfare in which Soldiers, during heavy fighting, have "disappeared." These Oriental "phantom Soldiers" — whether they were the "hidden" Japanese defenders of Iwo Jima in 1945; the Soldiers of no fewer than 10 Chinese divisions who infiltrated into North Korea in 1950 without being detected by U.S. reconnaissance aircraft; or the vanishing "besieged" North Vietnamese Army units in Hue City in South Vietnam in 1968 — have learned their craft well and are formidable adversaries.

This interesting study is divided into three main sections: "The Eastern Way of War," "The Differences in Tactical Technique;" and "The Next Disappearing Act." Drawing heavily upon the writings of Sun Tzu, Liu Tao, Mao Tse-tung, Vo Nguyen Giap, and other philosophers and practitioners of the military art, the author describes differences in Eastern and Western strategy and tactics and their application. "While the West doggedly applies what it has learned about itself in peacetime," notes the author, "the East flexibly applies what it learns about itself and its adversary during the actual fighting."

Eastern tactics are revealing and interesting. Eastern infantry units are versatile — equally adept at guerrilla, mobile, and positional warfare — and small-unit commanders are permitted to exercise significant flexibility and initiative. The Oriental commander, according to this study, is able to maximize the fighting capacity of his unit by adjusting its formation or battle array, advantageous positioning, responsiveness, and controlling the enemy. Deceptive measures and delaying techniques, in urban, defensive, and offensive situations, are also described and assessed in detail using many historical examples, maps, and diagrams.

The March 2002 outcome of Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan strongly suggests the U.S. Army needs better and more flexible leadership and more imaginative and inspired — and less rigid and dogmatic — tactics and training. The Eastern warrior, a master of stealth, deception, and flexibility — as characterized in the thought-provoking *Phantom Soldier* — and his tactics, are worthy of study and possible emulation and should not be underestimated.





## *The Soldier's Creed*

**I am an American Soldier.**

**I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.**

**I will always place the mission first.**

**I will never accept defeat.**

**I will never quit.**

**I will never leave a fallen comrade.**

**I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.**

**I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.**

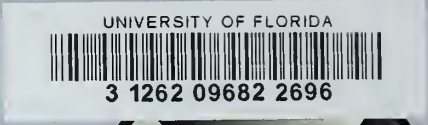
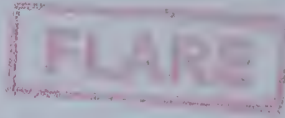
**I am an expert and I am a professional.**

**I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.**

**I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.**

**I am an American Soldier.**





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